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THOMAS HOOKER

THE COLONIAL HISTORY OF HARTFORD

GATHERED FROM THE ORIGINAL RECORDS

Illustrated

BY

REV. WILLIAM DELOSS LOVE, PH.D.

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TO

JOHN JAY CORNING

A DESCENDANT OF THE FOUNDERS OF

HARTFORD

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

PREFACE

The town of Hartford has passed the two hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of its settlement, and, in a few years, it will have completed three centuries of history. The early town that the founders knew has long since disappeared. Features that were familiar for generations have been swept away by the ravages of time. Only a few landmarks now remain. Within the area of what was formerly a country town, a large city has grown into vigorous life. To the sons and daughters of Hartford, the story of this development during colonial times, is of interest. It may also serve a patriotic purpose, by helping her citizens to maintain a fellowship with the forefathers, and by awakening in her children of foreign descent a loyal regard for her traditions. In the hope of rendering such a service to the city, for which the author confesses a strong personal affection, this volume has been written, in the course of a study of the records, extending over many years.

Students of Connecticut records have occasionally acknowledged their doubt whether certain fundamental facts, which concern both our local history and the founding of the Colony, have been correctly conceived. Views have become current, and have been passed on from one authority to another, which appeal for their warrant largely to records that have been lost, and are not in harmony with those that are extant. Such is the opinion that three organized towns created the Commonwealth. The records prior to 1639 that have disappeared, were those of three plantations, which were constituted as such and bore the names of the three Massachusetts towns from which their inhabitants emigrated. We have, fortunately, the early records of Springfield, at first united with them, to disclose the nature of their government. Hartford, alone, has documentary evidence of any town organization before the Commonwealth was formally established. Its own records show that the

legality of their premature organization and its acts was derived from the authority of the General Court of the colony. There has always been, moreover, an inconsistency between the theory of a commonwealth, created by three towns, and the claim of Connecticut, to have inaugurated modern democracy in her government. Neither the terms used in the Colonial Records, nor the language of the Constitution, declaring that it was the fundamental law of the "Inhabitants and Residents of Windsor, Harteford and Wethersfield," support the belief that they participated in this act as organized towns. It was the constitution of the people. Thus the zeal of historians, in advocating a traditional theory, has blinded them to the discovery of the initial establishment of democracy and the practice of its principles from the beginning of the Colony, as taught by the founders and, in due time, declared in a written constitution. It is not a sacrilege to dig about the roots of the vines to discover the truth. One method only is open to the historian under these circumstances — that of thorough research in the original records, which the truth must perfectly harmonize. Conclusions have thus been reached that were not anticipated and are at variance with the traditional belief; but the evidence seems to the author to warrant no other. As briefly stated, these conclusions are as follows: that, in the settlement of the River Plantations under the Warwick Patent, a compromise was effected, by which the government was made over to the colonists; that this was expressed in the Commission for a provisional government, which left them full liberty at its expiration; that the founders of Hartford considered that they had thus secured a right to the lands which the Dutch claimed; that the three original settlements were established as plantations, like Springfield, and so continued in their relation to the General Court until after the adoption of the Constitution, January 14, 1638–9, the legal inhabitants being represented by committees; that even the prior choice of townsmen by the North-side and South-side plantations of Hartford, for the sake of unity in their own affairs, did not give it participation, as a town, in the adoption of the Constitution, nor constitute legal standing as a factor in the government; and that

these plantations were authorized, by the General Court of the colony, October 10, 1639, to organize their town governments, which they effected before the next Court of Election, April 9, 1640, when their representatives were recognized as such and are called "Deputies" in the records.

The nature of these studies of original authorities has made it impossible to write a popular history. Such a volume, if it embodied current opinions concerning many early events, such as the pilgrimage of Thomas Hooker, would be of little permanent value; and if our deductions from the records had been so used, without detailed evidence, the volume would be discredited. The author has been content to adjust some of the foundation stones of our colonial history, and to build thereon with the materials which the records themselves provide. The town of Hartford has occupied such a place in the Commonwealth that this has been considered the greater service. Nor has it seemed necessary to continue this study into the last century. In 1883 and 1884 a series of articles on the "First Hundred Years of the City of Hartford," by Mr. John W. Stedman, was published in the *Hartford Sunday Journal.* About the same time the reminiscences of some aged citizens on "Old Days in Hartford" were preserved in the columns of *The Connecticut Post.* Many historical papers have also appeared in *The Hartford Courant* and *The Hartford Times.* These, with *The Memorial History of Hartford County* and certain monographs, magazine articles and church histories, have amply covered the field, and are cited in references.

It has been necessary to use antiquarian methods in solving some problems presented. In the absence of recorded statements, some conclusions do not admit of documentary proof. The householder, having lost his door key, believes that the one he finds on the steps, which fits the lock, is his own; but he has no absolute proof. Such beliefs rest upon the strength of probability. Thus many historical statements, now generally received as true, were at first established. The author has endeavored to make clear this distinction, and to qualify any matters of personal opinion or interpretation.

We make grateful mention of Mr. William S. Porter, whose laborious researches in the Hartford Land Records, in 1839, have in some respects lightened our labors; and of the local historians of the river towns. As the inception of this study was due to the printing of the first volume of *Hartford Town Votes*, in 1897, we express our indebtedness to Mr. James J. Goodwin, who, through the Connecticut Historical Society, made that publication possible. These records, with the book of *Original Distribution*, recently printed through the same agency, constitute the classics of Hartford's early history. It is hoped that the author's work will bring out into the light some facts hitherto concealed in their pages. The latter publication is cited in references, although most of the research was done in the manuscript volume some years since.

To the several officials of the city and state, acknowledgment is made for every courtesy in the examination of public records; to Mr. George S. Goddard, librarian of the State Library for access to many manuscripts in the archives; to Mr. Albert C. Bates, librarian of the Connecticut Historical Society, for material that has been helpful; and especially to Mr. Albert L. Washburn, surveyor, and an expert in our land records, for his generous coöperation and assistance.

WILLIAM DeLOSS LOVE

HARTFORD, CONN., February 23, 1914

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The Colonial History of Hartford

CHAPTER I

THE PIONEERS OF HARTFORD IN 1635

THE reasons that moved the people of Newtown, under the leadership of Thomas Hooker, to remove from Massachusetts to Connecticut, and thus become the founders of Hartford, have been fully discussed by historians. Agitation of the project began prior to May 15, 1634, on which date the General Court gave them permission "to seeke out some convenient place," promising to confirm it to them, provided the place chosen was not prejudicial to any plantation already settled. A removal outside of the jurisdiction of Massachusetts was not then contemplated, nor such permission intended; but subsequent events led them to interpret this action as liberty to go whither they desired. When a vote was taken, later, concerning the removal of Dorchester and Watertown, they were restricted to continue still under Massachusetts government. The Newtown emigrants may have thought that the place to which they were going was within the Bay Colony, but no such condition was ever imposed upon them. This early vote gave them more time and greater liberty to seek out a suitable location. It is important to follow the sequence of events after this action of May 15, 1634, for two years intervened between it and the pilgrimage of Thomas Hooker's company.

Shortly after they received the above permission, they sent men to Agawam and Merrimack "to find a fit place." They may have considered favorably the former location, for they "gave out they would remove"; but, even as they were reconnoitering, Rev. Thomas Parker and his company, just arrived from England, went thither to settle, and they were shut out.

At that time two ships, at least, were on the ocean, among whose passengers were original settlers of Hartford. They had sailed from Ipswich, England, about "the last of April," and because they had a pleasant voyage, arriving early in June, and very likely, also, because several of the passengers went to Agawam to settle, they changed its name to Ipswich. One of these ships was the *Elizabeth*, with Thomas Scott, William Blumfield, Robert Day, and, some say, Nathaniel Ely and John Clarke. The other was the *Francis*, with William Westwood, John Barnard, Nicholas Gennings and William Holton. In one of the six ships that had arrived in May, William Pantry, Samuel Greenhill, Timothy Stanley, and probably Thomas Stanley, were passengers. The distribution of lands at Newtown, August 4, 1634, may indicate that the following new-comers were also passengers in one of the "fourteen great ships" that arrived in June: Joseph Easton, James Ensign, John Hopkins, Thomas Judd, Stephen Post and George Stocking. These accessions quickened the desires of Newtown for more extensive fields.

We are not surprised, therefore, that within a few weeks of their arrival, or early in July, Winthrop records the fact that "Six of Newtown went in the Blessing, (being bound to the Dutch plantations,) to discover Connecticut River, intending to remove their town thither." These men were agents of Newtown. Perhaps some of the new arrivals were among them. Hubbard says: "The place which those that went from Cambridge had by their agents chosen to settle upon, was by the Indians called Suckiaug, where some of them began the plantation in the end of the year 1635, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Stone, the ministers of the church, engaging to follow them the next year, which they did and called it Hartford." [1] We have none of the names of these six agents. They doubtless accomplished their

[1] Hubbard's *History of New England*, pp. 306, 307. Mather has the following passage in the *Magnalia* (1: 81): "It was in the year 1635, that this design was first formed; and the disposition of the celebrated Mr. Thomas Hooker, with his people now in Cambridge, to engage in the design, was that which gave most life unto it. They then sent their agents to view the country, who returned with so advantageous a report that the next year there was a great remove of good people thither."

purpose and visited Suckiaug, but we have no account of their experiences.[1] They were the first Hartford men to discover Suckiaug, unless some of the traders of 1633 visited the place and afterwards settled there. They returned home during the summer with a favorable report of the land.

The next General Court met September 3, 1634, and its main business was the removal of Newtown to Connecticut. Mr. Hooker urged the "fruitfulness and commodiousness of Connecticut," as one who was speaking upon the information of their agents. The point was made, in reply, that they would expose themselves to evident peril, both from the Dutch and from the Indians. The result of this controversy was that an enlargement of Newtown's bounds was proposed and outwardly accepted. This compromise temporarily delayed their removal.

The fact is — and it is evident upon a close study of the conditions in Newtown at this time — that the town had received some new settlers in the ships of 1634, who were unwilling to locate permanently under such uncertainty. Either Newtown must remove, or these and other prospective settlers would go elsewhere. Grants of land were made to most of them, but their lots were inferior, and the town's bounds were limited. There is evidence in the Cambridge land records that some of the new-comers did not erect upon their lots houses worthy of being so named. Thus they passed the "winter of their discontent."

In the emigrant ships of 1635, others of the founders of Hartford arrived. The *Elizabeth and Ann* from London brought Clement Chaplin, John Holloway and Thomas Lord, while Mathew Marvin, William Ruscoe and John Warner were passengers in the *Increase*. Eight ships arrived during the first week of June. Some, who were early settlers in Windsor, Hartford and Wethersfield, and who

[1] They were entertained, doubtless, by Jonathan Brewster, resident agent of the Plymouth Company at Windsor; and perhaps they visited the Dutch at the House of Hope. From the latter they would have received no encouragement. Brewster, in his letter of July 6, 1635, speaks in a confusing way of a party — perhaps Windsor pioneers — which he assisted with canoes and guides. "They got me to goe with them," he says, "to ye Dutch, to see if I could procure some [land] of them to have quiet setling nere them; but they did peremtorily withstand them." Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation*, p. 339.

have left no trace of an earlier residence in Massachusetts, probably came in these ships. Arriving at a time when the Connecticut fever was at its height, they were ready to join in an enterprise that had among its leaders some of the best men in the Colony.

Who were the brave pioneers of Hartford in 1635? When did they remove to Suckiaug, and where did they build their huts? No attempt has ever been made to answer these questions in detail. It is only possible to establish, in some particulars, a strong probability, based upon the harmony of correlated facts; but even such an answer may be worth while.

On October 5, 1635, Rev. Thomas Shepard and his company from England, arrived at Newtown. This is his statement: "Monday October 5, we came (being sent for by friends at Newtown,) to them, to my brother Mr. Stones house. And the congregation being upon their removal to Hartford, at Connecticut, myself and those that came with me, found many houses empty, and many persons willing to sell, and hence our company bought off their houses to dwell in." [1] There were, therefore, if this statement is taken literally, "many houses empty" on October 5th. Were these vacancies caused by the removal of families to Connecticut, as Shepard seems to imply? An answer to this question is found in the Cambridge land records.

The Massachusetts General Court, on April 1, 1634, had ordered that all houses and lands be recorded within six months, and such record was to constitute evidence of estate. Hence this was necessary before an inhabitant could make a legal transfer of his home. At Newtown, they did not begin making such entries until May 1, 1635. Between that date and October 10th following, nearly all the emigrants to Connecticut complied with this order. Of these, twenty-four had done so before the arrival of Shepard; but on October 5th, nine did so, and on the 10th, nineteen. Only one is proved, by these records, to have sold before the above meeting at Samuel Stone's house — John Steele, who recorded his house and lands on August 20th and sold on the 28th. There were, however, some,

[1] "Thomas Shepard's Memoir," in Young's *Chronicles of Mass.*, p. 544.

who removed to other Massachusetts towns, that had done so; and others apparently removed and sold afterwards. In view of these circumstances, we conclude that the empty houses had not been occupied by emigrants to Connecticut. On the other hand, it seems, on the face of the record, that some of the latter had made their entries because they had agreed to sell, and that others were preparing to do so. Thomas Scott sold on the very day of Shepard's arrival. Stephen Hart recorded his lands on the 5th and sold on the 7th. Others, who are thought to have removed to Connecticut in 1635, probably did the same. Shepard testifies that he found many "willing to sell." Johnson, in his *Wonder-working Providence*, puts the case thus: "And therefore they onely waited now for a people of ſtronger Faith then themſelves were to purchaſe their Houſes and Land . . . and accordingly they met with Chapmen, a people new come, who having bought their poſſeſſions, they highed them away to their new Plantation."

It is unfortunate that the records do not give the date when each emigrant sold his Newtown home, for the presumption is that he removed at that time, or soon afterwards. However, we have, by inference, a record of those who had sold before February 8, 1635–6, and presumably did not spend that winter in Cambridge. On that date, the town took action restricting these sales, except on certain conditions. A list was then made of those who had houses that were accounted "houses of the town." [1] We find that those concerning whom we have evidence of a removal in 1635, are missing from it, and that those who are known to have accompanied Thomas Hooker in 1636, still retained their old homes. If we compare this list of householders with the former of recorded homes, we have another list that presumably includes all the house owners who removed to Suckiaug permanently in 1635. From this, we can erase the names of several who remained at Cambridge during the winter, or who were never North-side inhabitants of Hartford. We have thus a list, derived from the Cambridge records, composed of ten Hartford settlers, who are assumed to have emigrated thither in

[1] *Records of the Town and Selectmen of Cambridge*, 1901, pp. 17–19.

1635. Their names may be arranged in the following order: Elder William Goodwin, John Steele, William Westwood, Thomas Scott, Stephen Hart, William Pantry, John Barnard, William Butler, William Kelsey and Nathaniel Ely. We should add to this list, however, any who had only recorded land at Cambridge, and of whose removal in 1635 there is other evidence. Nicholas Clarke had only a small lot. He had sold or forfeited it and left Newtown before the above date. He is known to have spent the winter at Suckiaug. Richard Webb, Richard Goodman and Edward Elmer had recorded no houses. They are added upon evidence derived from the Hartford records. Two others may be added for the same reason. Mathew Marvin was a recent arrival, and we have no trace of his residence. Sergeant Thomas Stanley of Lynn was a deputy to the General Court, September 2, 1635, when the removal was decided. He was later fined at Lynn for absence. Let us, for the time, consider these sixteen early settlers of Hartford, as a tentative list of the pioneers of 1635.

On the other hand, there is positive evidence, derived from records and correspondence, that some of these men did remove in 1635 to Suckiaug. Elder William Goodwin was evidently an enthusiastic advocate of the emigration. He was present at the General Court, September 3, 1634, when it was under consideration. Although he was "a very reverend and godly man," says Winthrop, he was so interested that he indulged in "some unreverend speech" in the discussion, for which he "humbly acknowledged his fault," but was, very likely, more than ever determined to change his residence. In his letter, written from Suckiaug to John Winthrop, Jr., on June 22, 1636, he says in a postscript: "I suppose you here by our brethren of the arriueal of our pastore," implying his own previous residence. In 1639, moreover, he was one of those chosen to gather up for record the passages of God's providence that had been remarkable since the "first undertaking" of the plantation. Presumably he was thought to know about the experiences of 1635–6.

The records of the General Court, held at Newtown, September 2, 1635, have the following entry: "William

Westwood is sworne constable of the plantacons att Connecticott till some other be chosen." The same court granted liberty to every town at Connecticut to choose constables and authorized magistrates to administer the oath of office. It also provided guns and ammunition for the plantations. Evidently this appointment of William Westwood was in anticipation of a removal to Suckiaug in the near future. Constables were then the proper civil officers for guard and defence. The emigrants had every reason to think they would be needed.

The Commission for a provisional government of Connecticut, issued in March 1635–6, rehearses the fact that some of the settlers were from Newtown and states that "divers are there already." The representatives of Suckiaug were John Steele and William Westwood. If certain persons were already there, men of that number would certainly have been chosen for this service.

Let us sum up our deductions, as we are about to leave Newtown with the pioneers. We know, from Shepard's statement, that the congregation there were, on October 5, 1635, "upon their removal," a phrase that means, in other instances, "about to remove"; that the land records do not warrant the opinion that any of them had as yet set out; that, immediately upon Shepard's arrival and a meeting at Stone's house, some were in haste to record their houses and lands, which was necessary in order to sell; that some did sell at once, and a certain number had sold before midwinter; that some of these had for a month been preparing to remove; and that certain of their leaders in church and state did actually go to Connecticut in 1635. If now we read in the journal of a contemporary historian that a party set out for Connecticut shortly after these preparations and sales, and we find the settlers of our tentative list in the Hartford land records, living side by side in the oldest part of the plantation, which certainly was settled in 1635, we may fairly consider the case to be proved, as far as the circumstances admit.

We come thus to that paragraph in Winthrop's journal, which has always been a bone of contention among the three river towns. Under the date October 15, 1635, he

says: "About sixty men, women and little children, went by land toward Connecticut with their cows, horses, and swine, and, after a tedious and difficult journey, arrived safe there." [1] In view of the above examination of the records, there are good reasons for the claim, which we here make, that this entry refers to the Hartford pioneers. Such has been the opinion of some of our most accurate local historians, formed even without the above study of the original records. Historians of Windsor, however, have claimed that most of this company "were Dorchester people, joined by a few from Newtown and Watertown." [2]

The Dorchester people supplanted the Plymouth Company, which had been at Windsor since September 16, 1633, and which they bought out May 15, 1637. The pioneer party under Roger Ludlow arrived late in June, 1635, or early in July. The Stiles party sailed from Boston June 26, 1635. On July 6th, Jonathan Brewster wrote from Windsor thus: "Ye Massachusetts men are coming almost dayly some by water & some by land." [3] He doubtless referred to these two parties. Besides some stragglers, there was another Dorchester company, which removed late in the season. Winthrop says their arrival was so late that some of their cattle "could not be put over the river," which was frozen up the 15th of November.[4] They had sent their provisions around by water in "barks," to which they endeavored to retreat when famine stared them in the face; "but not meeting them, they went aboard the Rebecka," which was frozen in the ice towards the river's mouth.

This narrative relates to Windsor settlers, but it could hardly have referred to the emigrants who started on October 15th, and "arrived safe there." The Windsor party did not arrive until after November 15th, when the river was frozen. The journey of the former company could not have required a month, especially as the lateness of the season urged them to haste. Thomas Hooker, with his encumbrances, only needed a "fortnight." If the Dor-

[1] Winthrop's *History of New England*, I, 204.

[2] *Memorial History of Hartford County*, I: 221; Stiles's *History of Wethersfield*, I: 21; Stiles's *History of Windsor*, I: 52 n.

[3] Bradford's *History*, p. 338.

[4] Winthrop's *History*, I: 208, 209. Cf. p. 219.

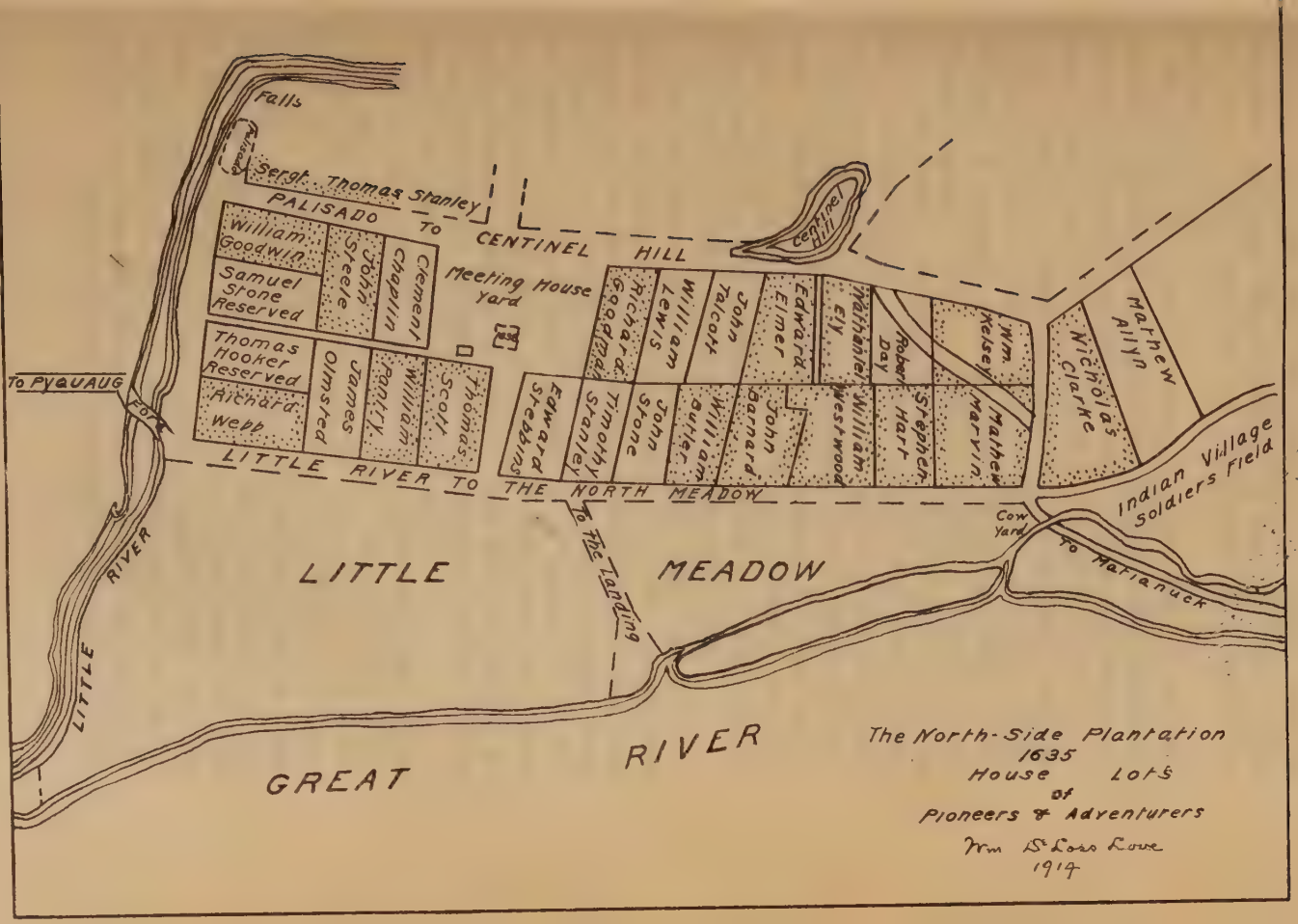
chester company started late in October, there was time to make ready for winter under ordinary conditions of the weather, for they had reason to expect that the pioneers had provided ample shelter, and they had sent forward abundant provisions. In both expectations, they were disappointed — hence their disaster, in which there is no evidence that the pioneers of Hartford participated.[1] All these perplexing passages in Winthrop's narrative are harmonized by the conclusion — which we can hardly escape — that there were two companies that removed to Connecticut that autumn — one, from Newtown, starting October 15th, and another, later, following the Natick path, from Dorchester. This is confirmed by circumstances hereafter related.

The membership of the pioneer company from Newtown is interesting and an important factor in the case. Nearly one-half of them were recent arrivals from England. The majority were young men, and several were unmarried. Their families were small. Judged by their after lives, they were a hardy and courageous company. Among them, were several who were classed later as wealthy settlers. Their religious leader was the elder of their church, a personal friend of Thomas Hooker and a man to whose judgment large concerns in church and state were intrusted. John Steele and William Westwood were considered suitable men to be made magistrates, and proved themselves worthy of the honor. In the judgment of the wise, it was necessary for some to go forward to prepare the way, and there was at least a tacit agreement, to which the ministers were a party, that others would follow the next season. Surely this company had some qualifications for the task to which they devoted themselves. As those who had severed their relations with Newtown probably took their families with them, there were in this party, to the best of our knowledge, about fifty persons — men, women and children.

[1] The pioneers of Windsor were doubtless handicapped by their land difficulties, and so were prevented from securing winter fodder for their cattle and building more than a few "dug-outs." It is believed that they did not begin to lay out their first lots until September. Mathew Grant testified, April 21, 1675, that he measured and set out their lots "from our [their] firſt beginning," which "come nixt September is 40 yere." State Archives, *Private Controversies*, I: 138.

It was doubtless during the last days of October that the pioneers of Hartford reached their destination. They found at Suckiaug only a group of Indian wigwams north of the Little River, and the Dutch at the House of Hope. The former were located, it is believed, on the tract of land west of the North Meadow creek. The Little Meadow extended westward from the Connecticut River to the line of the woodland.

The first English settlers at Suckiaug seem to have done the most natural thing in arranging their house-lots. Beginning at the northern end, they made divisions along the border line of the woodland as far south as the Little River. There, it is thought, the Indian trail ran. The houses eventually erected upon these lots thus faced the open meadow, with the Great River beyond. Along, in front of their homes, they soon widened the trail into a roadway. This highway was called the "Road from the Little River to the North Meadow." It was the first stage in the development of Front Street. The ridge of the hill behind their houses, was some distance westward and ran about parallel with their road. At its northern end was a mound or hill, coming gradually to a summit, which, very likely, had been used by the natives as a lookout, or for defence. It was called by the English "Centinel Hill." A path would naturally run from the Indian village up the slope to it, which became the "Road from Centinel Hill to the North Meadow," our present Village Street. At first it ran through Robert Day's lot. From this hill, they made a roadway southward along the ridge to the Little River, where they designed to erect their palisado or fort. Perhaps they found an Indian trail leading from the hill to the falls, which must have been a famous fishing place for the natives and offered the whites a mill site. This highway was called the "Road from Centinel Hill to the Palisado," and is now Main Street. About midway, they arranged for a public field or square, where to build their meeting-house. A road ran thence eastward, which was called the "Road from the Meeting House to the Little Meadow" or "to the Great River." This was the extent of their occupation and development. It was sufficient for their immediate needs.


Falls
Sergt. Thomas Stanley
PALISADO
to
CENTINEL HILL
Centinel Hill
William Goodwin
Samuel Stone Reserved
John Steele
Clement Chaplin
Meeting House Yard
Thomas Hooker Reserved
Richard Wepp
James Olmsted
Robert Feild
William Scott
Thomas
Edward Stebbins
Timothy Stanley
John Stone
William Gaylard
John Barnard
Nathaniel Westwood
William
Robert Day
Stephen Hart
Marvin
Mather
Wm. Kelsey
Richard Goodrich
Lewis
William
John Talcott
Elmer
Edward
Nicholas Clarke
Mathew Allyn
To Pyquaug
Ford
LITTLE RIVER TO THE NORTH MEADOW
Cow Yard
Indian Village
Soldiers Field
LITTLE RIVER
LITTLE MEADOW
To the Landing
To Mattanuck
LITTLE RIVER
GREAT RIVER
The North-Side Plantation
1635
House Lots
of
Pioneers & Adventurers
Wm DeLoss Love
1914

There is no doubt that this section is the oldest part of Hartford. It was the Suckiaug of the pioneers. Here they built their first huts or "dug-outs," and spent the winter of 1635–6.

Who were the original owners of house-lots within this section? The land records tell us. The answer is found on Porter's "Plan of Hartford in 1640." If we go southward along Front Street from the Indian village, using our type to point out the sixteen pioneers, the owners were: Mathew Allyn, *Nicholas Clarke*, *Mathew Marvin*, *Stephen Hart*, *William Westwood*, *John Barnard*, *William Butler*, John Stone, Timothy Stanley, Edward Stebbins, *Thomas Scott*, *William Pantry*, James Olmsted and *Richard Webb*. In like manner, going southward along Main Street, the owners were: *William Kelsey*, Robert Day, *Nathaniel Ely*, *Edward Elmer*, John Talcott, William Lewis, *Richard Goodman*, Clement Chaplin, *John Steele*, *Sergeant Thomas Stanley* west of the highway, and *Elder William Goodwin* east of it. Two lots facing Little River seem to have been reserved for their ministers, Thomas Hooker and Samuel Stone.

Most of these names are familiar. Here are all the sixteen pioneers of our tentative list. We have some reasons to believe that they were a company of emigrants seeking a new home in Connecticut; and here we find them at Suckiaug, settled close together in a compact body for mutual assistance and defence; on the one side, their Indian friends, and on the other, their palisado, beside an abundant stream, offering a serious warning to the Dutchmen living south of it, in the House of Hope.

There are, however, among these pioneers, nine others who are new acquaintances. They had not sold their homes at Newtown February 8, 1635–6. It is believed that all of them were in the company of Thomas Hooker in 1636. Several of them are known to have been in Cambridge during the winter or spring. How then, if our theory is correct, did they apparently secure these house-lots thus early, interspersed as they are, at random among the lots of the pioneers? We can only offer a conjectural answer to this question, for which, however, there are some good reasons. They accompanied the emigrating party of 1635,

to assist in establishing them, intending to return before the winter set in, and, being present or represented at the first meeting of Suckiaug planters, they received an allotment with the others.

There is no doubt that the Hartford land records recognize certain Newtown emigrants as "Adventurers." This term is probably applied here, as in other instances, to those who, through an occupation earlier than the town's legal title, secured a right to land. A tract in Hartford, comprising about thirty-five acres, and hereafter located, was divided among certain settlers and was called in the records "Adventurers' Field." The original owners were: John Steele, William Westwood, Thomas Scott, Stephen Hart, William Pantry, John Barnard, Richard Webb, Richard Goodman, Mathew Marvin, Thomas Stanley, James Olmsted and John Talcott Nathaniel Ely was the original owner of the Brick-kiln lot of six and one-half acres, virtually a part of this tract. The mill tract south of it was given to Mathew Allyn. The first six of these names immediately follow that of William Goodwin in our tentative list of pioneers. The next four win their title to a place in it by their grants in this tract. James Olmsted and John Talcott were householders in Cambridge during the winter. The former may have been represented among the adventurers by his son Nicholas Olmsted. John Talcott was in Cambridge early in the spring. His house at Suckiaug, however, was erected in the winter of 1635–6. The memorandum book of his son, Lieutenant-Colonel John Talcott, has the following entry: "The kitchen, that now stands on the north side of the house that I live in, was the first house that my father built in Hartford, in Conn. colony, and was done by Nicholas Clark, the first winter that any Englishman rought or built in Hartford, which was in the year 1635."[1] This evidence indicates that John Talcott may have accompanied the pioneers, secured his lot, arranged for the erection of a house and returned later in the season. Nicholas Clarke, however, had no grant in Adventurers' Field, or the two special tracts south of it. Neither had Goodwin, Butler, Kelsey and Elmer of our tentative list,

[1] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 263.

nor six others who are supposed to have secured house-lots in 1635. These also would have had a right of prior occupation and an adventurer's proportion. As Talcott and Olmsted were also adventurers, others may have been. We conclude, therefore, that this particular tract, being of limited extent, did not provide for all. Across the highway northwest of these lots, was Little Ox Pasture. The original grantees in its eastern tier of lots, beginning at the highway and going north, were: William Butler, William Hayden, Richard Goodman, Edward Elmer, Robert Day, Nicholas Clarke and Nathaniel Ely. Perhaps some of the adventurers preferred these larger lots. The name of William Hayden in this company may indicate that he also was a pioneer, for he had a house-lot near them. William Goodwin received an extensive grant in the South Meadow, which was an exception to the rule of distribution, as he was a North-side inhabitant. Edward Stebbins and William Kelsey were original owners in a large tract called "Middle Ox Pasture." John Stone removed early to Guilford and Clement Chaplin settled in Wethersfield. No one of those early settlers lacked for land, but what special grant may have been made to them, we do not know. A large latitude of choice was certainly allowed them, to suit their needs.

There seems, also, to be confirmatory evidence that the above solution is correct in the case of Clement Chaplin. He secured one of the best house-lots among the pioneers, but he did not settle upon it. During the winter he was at Cambridge, being present at a town meeting in February, and probably removed in Hooker's company, but went directly, it is believed, to Wethersfield to settle. In 1639, he was one of those chosen by the General Court to make a record of the "first undertaking" of the plantations. On January 14, 1639–40, the town of Hartford, on account of his absence, appointed a committee to "Deall wth m^{r} Chaplin aboute his [lands, that] are fforfeted into the Towns hands," but without any results. They were recorded to him in 1644, and afterwards sold by him or his widow. We can only account for this unusual procedure on the assumption that he claimed to have secured a right by

occupation in 1635, before the inhabitants had any title under the Warwick Patent, as they thought, or had purchased the lands from the Indians. As the pioneers, albeit they were adventurers, were all squatters, this was too delicate a matter under the circumstances to argue with a dissenting party.[1] The town likewise made exceptions in the cases of William Butler and Nicholas Olmsted. The latter inherited his father's house-lot.

There *was* a company of men, whose names are unknown, who returned to the Bay late that autumn. Under the date November 26, 1635, Winthrop made the following entry: "There came twelve men from Connecticut. They had been ten days upon their journey, and had lost one of their company, drowned in the ice by the way; and had been all starved, but that, by God's providence, they lighted upon an Indian wigwam. Connecticut River was frozen up the 15th of this month."[2] This party started to return on the 16th, the day after the river was frozen up. It could not, therefore, have been composed of Dorchester people, who arrived too late to get their cattle across, unless we suppose that they immediately abandoned their herds and started back overland. Nor is it likely that any Windsor pioneers would set out to return on the eve of expected arrivals and the coming of barks loaded with provisions. This party was composed wholly of men. That is a significant fact. We do not believe that there were any men in Windsor, who would desert the women and children of that plantation under circumstances that so soon resulted in disaster. It is here claimed, without any hesitation, that this party of men was composed of Newtown emigrants, who had accompanied the pioneers to assist them in preparing winter quarters and erecting a palisado for defence in need, with the prior intention of returning

[1] Clement Chaplin is one of the personal enigmas of our local history. He was evidently a leader and a man of ability. In Wethersfield he became the "proud and wealthy ruling elder" of the church, and was a cause of much trouble. His desertion of the Newtown company, and his subsequent experiences, lead one to suspect that he was an ardent champion of ecclesiastical rights and privileges, which may have been a reason for his settlement in Wethersfield and the factional disputes in which he was engaged.

[2] Winthrop's *History*, I: 207.

to their former homes. On the day after the river was closed, they set out in haste, taking too little provision from the pioneers' store. One of the unlucky thirteen — perhaps a servant and unknown by name — was drowned in attempting to cross somewhere on the ice. Along the trail, they lost their way and were rescued by the host of an Indian wigwam.

If there were, as Winthrop states, "about sixty men, women and little children" in the original pioneer company, the number of those who returned, with the fifty already accounted for, would make the party complete. An opinion as to the identity of those who remained at Suckiaug during that winter of hardship, can only be based upon the assumption that those would be most likely to do so who had sold their homes in Newtown or had no ties to call them back. Upon the best evidence that the records afford, their names are included in the list of sixteen who are called pioneers.

It was doubtless during the interval between the arrival of this company and the return of their friends, that the formal beginning of the North-side Plantation was made. If we assume that they proceeded in the usual way, they met, chose a moderator of the meeting and passed such votes as their present needs required. They would, naturally, vote that every inhabitant should have a house-lot, and a due proportion of meadow, pasturage and woodland. Probably they made a division of house-lots only that season. Thus they began their plantation.

The first labor of these pioneers was to prepare their dug-outs in the hillside and provide some rude shelter for their cattle. This was not a great task for hardy woodsmen; nor were such homes uncomfortable.[1] Probably they did not suffer from the cold during the winter. They had fire

[1] The following description of a settler's dug-out has been given by Mr. Jabez H. Hayden of Windsor: "Beginning a few feet below the brow of the hill, they excavated a space the size of the proposed house, throwing up the earth at the sides and west end. On the embankment thus made, they laid a plate, on which they rested the foot of the rafters. Where stone was convenient, a wall was laid under the plate, but as stone was scarce here they must have dispensed with it. Instead of shingle, the roof was thatched with a course of wild grass. The east end was probably made from 'clove' boards, i.e., boards cloven or split from short logs and hewn into shape. Only the east end and roof of these structures appeared

pits within and plenty of wood. The flood of the spring, however, brought some of them trouble. Stephen Hart and Mathew Marvin, who had located at the northern end of Front Street, found themselves inundated, if we may so interpret their early selection of other house-lots on the "Road to the Neck." [1] Their great hardship arose from the scarcity of food for themselves and fodder for their cattle. Provisions had, no doubt, been provided in advance and sent around by water, as the custom was.[2] Such supplies usually prove to be insufficient. The pioneers of all the river plantations suffered for lack of food, as they did also for several winters thereafter. Some subsisted upon acorns. Still they had many reasons for thankfulness. The two great dangers, with which their removal had been threatened, did not arise. The Indians were friendly and helpful, and the Dutch were peacefully hibernating in the House of Hope. So the palisado, which they had made on the bank of the Little River, whither to seek refuge in an attack, was never a memorable place of warfare about which the whoop of the savage was heard. No event in Hartford's early history was ever associated with it. There it lingered for a few years, on its way to decay. The only fancy we can entertain concerning it is, that there within its log house, as their only public meeting place during the wearisome winter, Elder William Goodwin, their leader, standing in the place of his friend Thomas Hooker, gathered those brave pioneers to conduct the simple Puritan service of worship.

At last, the scattered snow melted on the hillsides. Around their huts, the bluebirds were seen. The flood of the Great River came, and it was spring in Connecticut. Then they came forth into the reviving hope of a new world.

above ground." Stiles's *Hist. of Windsor*, I: 33. See also *Early Connecticut Houses*, by Isham and Brown, pp. 12, 13.

[1] Stephen Hart had, when his land was recorded, "One parcell on which his dwellinge house once stood," and also "One parcell on which his dwellinge house now standeth with other outhouses, yards and gardens." *Original Distribution*, p. 190, in *Conn. Hist. Soc. Coll.* Vol. XIV. Mathew Marvin had, beside the lot on which his dwelling house was standing, "one parcell for a house lott in the necke of land." *Ibid.*, pp. 89, 90.

[2] Winthrop's *History*, I. 207.

CHAPTER II

SETTLEMENT UNDER THE WARWICK PATENT

The title "Warwick Patent" has been applied to that patent which Robert, Earl of Warwick, has been thought to have received from the Council for New England, by virtue of which he made a grant, March 19, 1631, to certain lords and gentlemen of England, of the territory now included in Connecticut. The discussion of the patent itself, and its validity, is left to others.[1] We are concerned, merely, with the use the founders of the river plantations made of it. There is no doubt that, late in the winter of 1635–6, an understanding was effected between the emigrants and the representatives of the Warwick patentees, for the establishment of the river towns under the patent's favor. This agreement resulted, not only in some conditions affecting Connecticut's early government, to be considered hereafter, but also in certain plans and proceedings in the settlement of Hartford, which it is now our purpose to bring out into the light.

The season of 1635 at Windsor had been one of contention between the Dorchester pioneers, under Roger Ludlow, the Plymouth Trading Company, and the party of Francis Stiles. The traders of Plymouth had been tenants of the land since 1633, and claimed rights of prior settlement. The Stiles party came to occupy the land in behalf of the patentees. They were virtually crowded out by the aggressive pioneers. The patentees protested when they learned the facts. Lord Saye and Sele wrote that the emigrants had "carved largely for themselves," and would repent when they saw what helps they had deprived themselves of. He was doubtless right. At least, they did recede from the position they had taken in the early ardor of their venture.

[1] *The Warwick Patent*, by Dr. Charles J. Hoadly, Acorn Club Publications, 1902; *Connecticut's Warwick Patent*, by Forrest Morgan, 1910; *Connecticut Colonial Records*, I: 568–572; *Connecticut as a Colony*, I: 65 ff.

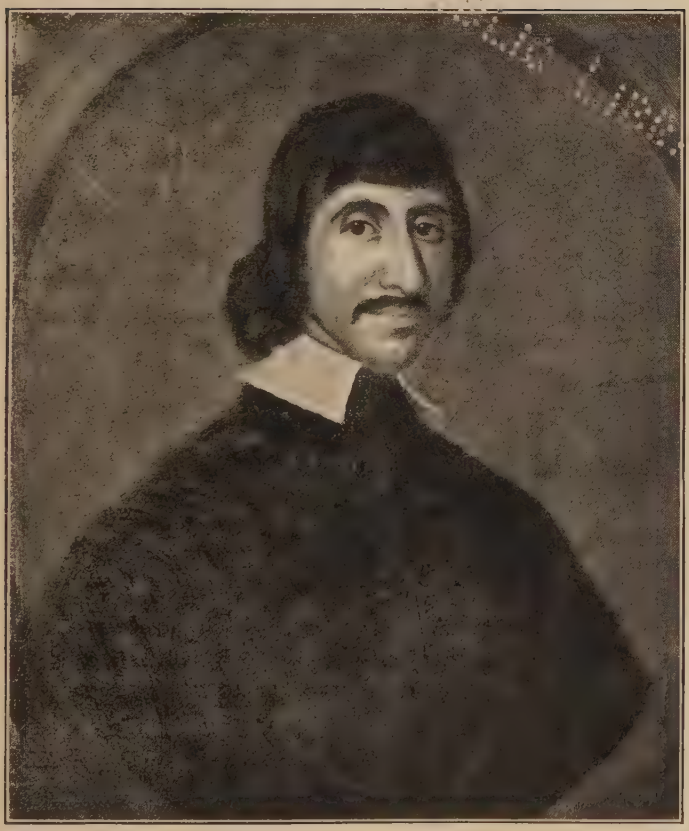
Most of them, as it happened, driven out by starvation, returned to Dorchester in the *Rebecca*, arriving there on December 10th. There they had occasion to reconsider their hostile course.

The patentees had also, on July 8, 1635, commissioned John Winthrop, Jr., to build a fort and erect houses at the mouth of the Connecticut River. He was empowered to be the governor of their territory for one year.[1] He arrived at Boston in the *Abigail* early in October. Within a few weeks, he sent a party to Saybrook to begin the design, just in time to anticipate the Dutch. The governor himself did not go thither until the next spring.

There had come with him from England, Mr. Henry Vane, Jr., son of the King's comptroller, and Rev. Hugh Peters, a somewhat famous minister, who was the stepfather of Winthrop's wife. These three had been constituted the representatives of the Warwick patentees. They had orders from Lord Saye and Sele, to treat with the Massachusetts magistrates and "those who were to go to Connecticut," as to the relation of the river plantations to the patentees' authority and plans. The pioneers of Suckiaug had set out in haste shortly after Winthrop's arrival, before anything was done, going thither without any other government than was provided in the choice of a constable. As Thomas Hooker, and other leaders of Newtown, had not as yet removed, the circumstances were favorable for all parties to consider matters involved in the general emigration that was contemplated the following season. This discussion was continued at intervals during the winter of 1635–6.

One fact, of paramount importance to the river plantations, thrust this subject upon their attention. The patentees then positively declared that the river settlements were outside of the Massachusetts patent and within the territory they themselves claimed. Their representatives — Vane, Peters and Winthrop — put the following questions to all the emigrating towns, and especially to the Dorchester people:

[1] Winthrop's *History*, I: 202, 203; Trumbull's *History of Connecticut*, I: 497, 498.



Governor John Winthrop of Connecticut

"Imprimis, whether they do acknowledge the rights and claims of the said persons of quality, and in testimony thereof will and do submit to the counsel and direction of their present governour, Mr. John Winthrop the younger, established by commission from them in those parts."

"Secondly, under what right and pretence they have lately taken up their plantations within the precincts forementioned, and what government they intend to live under, because the said country is out of the claim of the Massachusetts patent."

"Item, what answer and reasons we may return to the said patentees, if the said towns intend to intrench upon their rights and privileges, and justify the same." [1]

This declaration of the patentees' jurisdiction placed the emigrants in a very embarrassing position. They could not deny the claim. Already, they had themselves suspected that they were outside of the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, and were glad to believe it. There were, moreover, no good grounds upon which they could justify the rights and privileges that their pioneer companies had already assumed. Yet they were challenged, somewhat peremptorily, for an answer. No doubt important and interesting conferences followed. If they were conducted according to the expressed wishes of the representatives, they were "with as much secrecy as may be." Points were certainly raised that could not be settled, except by correspondence with the patentees themselves, who were in England. Dr. Hoadly says that "Hooker corresponded with Lord Saye and Sele." It surely developed that the patentees were not hostile to the emigration. At one time, says the same authority, Sir Richard Saltonstall himself "proposed to build at Hartford and join with Mr. Hooker, who, as he knew, was intending to remove thither." This correspondence was not finished in March when the Commission for a provisional government was issued, as that document itself states. The representatives were sufficiently assured, however, of the patentees' wishes to proceed to an agreement with the emigrants to Connecticut.

The leaders among the removing towns must have seen,

[1] Winthrop's *History*, I: 477, 478.

at once, that they could only secure title to their lands under the Warwick Patent. It was inevitable under the circumstances. This of itself was not so objectionable to them. It was rather a "help," as one of the patentees had stated. The sequel proved it to be such. If we may reason, however, from the conclusion, there was one condition, pointedly stated in the above declaration, to which objection was made. It was the required submission to the government, set up by the authority of the patentees. Allegiance was required to a governor, unobjectionable in himself, in the choice of whom the settlers had no voice. We cannot imagine that Roger Ludlow would accept any such provision. He would rather remain in Massachusetts. The flaunting of this claim of governmental rights in his face at Windsor, had doubtless been one reason why his company had carved so largely for themselves. Much less would this principle have been acceptable to Thomas Hooker. It would have destroyed all present hopes of securing such a government as he is supposed to have already seen in his visions. Surely it was radically opposed to his ideas subsequently expressed, and embodied in Connecticut's early constitutional government. This feature, it is believed, was the leading subject of correspondence with the patentees. There are indications, too, that their views, when ascertained, were found to be in harmony with those held by the settlers. It seems impossible that a settlement could have been made, as it was, had they been opposed.

Thus an understanding was arrived at, late in the winter of 1635–6. A tentative agreement was made between the parties, which was embodied in the Commission for a provisional government, as hereafter set forth. This agreement was, in fact, a compromise, in which the emigrants agreed to settle under the Warwick Patent, and the patentees made over to the colonists their rights of government. Under this, both parties acquired benefits. The patentees needed colonists to make good their claim to the lands. They were far-sighted enough to see that actual settlement would be recognized as the strongest support of their patent claims, as, indeed, the sequel proved. They were not so

particular about government. Certainly they had no reason to be, if they knew that what they had, if anything, was only "a deed of feoffment" in the lands. On the other hand, the emigrants from Massachusetts, since they were going outside of that colony's patent, needed some legal standing in their claim to the lands they intended to settle. To secure it, they were willing to take what was offered by the lords and gentlemen in England, so long as it left them free to conduct their own government. By this compromise, therefore, each party secured what was considered most advantageous to its own interests.

As to the fact that the removal of 1636 was conducted under the patronage of the patentees, there is no doubt. Concerning these settlers, Johnson, in his quaint history, says: "Being out of the Mattachufets Patten, they erected another Government, called by the Indian name, Canectico, being farther incouraged by two honorable perfonages, the Lord Say, and Lord Brookes." [1] On June 7, 1661, when the Colony sought the favor of Lord Saye and Sele in securing a charter, it addressed him in a letter as follows: "The former encouragements that our fathers, and some of their yet surviving associates, received from your honor to transplant themselves and families into these inland parts of this vast wilderness, where (as we have been given to understand) your honor was, and as we conceive and hope are still interested, by virtue of patent power and authority, doth not only persuade us, but assure us of your patronage and favor." [2]

This need of a patent right to the lands was especially urgent, in view of the future relation of Newtown's plantation to the Dutch, at the House of Hope. It gave them, as they believed, a good title to the lands they wanted. Perhaps they thought that they would thus acquire something more in the privileges, which patents were sometimes supposed to include. It would, at least, bring them under the protection of England and be good as colonists, as against the claims of the Dutch. Perhaps special interest attaches to Winthrop's record, that, in January, "one went

[1] Johnson's *Wonder-working Providence*, p. 76.
[2] Trumbull's *Hist. of Connecticut*, I: 513, 514.

by land to Connecticut and returned safe." Was he a messenger to the Suckiaug pioneers, carrying information, which it was important they should have, before they had committed themselves to the Dutch? No man would have taken that journey alone, and in the dead of winter, except in an emergency. Hitherto, the settlers from Newtown had not entered upon the land south of the Little River, which the Dutch claimed. There is no evidence that they intended to do so. The pioneers of 1635 had established their plantation, laid out their house-lots and planned their divisions of land, apparently with the expectation that the main body to follow would be associated with them. The acquisition of rights under the patent entirely altered and greatly improved their prospects. They had thus secured a reasonable ground for claiming the land south of the Little River. They had only to enter in and possess it. This, then, was the situation that presented itself to the Newtown emigrants in the spring of 1636.

There was one other matter that compelled their immediate attention. It was general among New England colonists to purchase their lands from the native owners. The pioneers had entered upon their claim without any such purchase, though perhaps they had made a verbal treaty with the Indians. A conveyance was necessary. They would be at a disadvantage without it, notwithstanding the patent, if they attempted to occupy any part of the land claimed by the Dutch. Lord Saye and Sele has himself mentioned the object of such a purchase. He has also stated the fact in the following language: "Many of the English (his Majesty's Subjects) having been incorporated by his Majesty's letters patent, and having, in order to obviate all difficulties, purchased the land from the natives, the acknowledged and right owners thereof, established divers factories on the river." [1] His lordship made this statement in connection with the controversy with the Dutch; nor could it have applied to any other plantation than Newtown. It seems, therefore, to have been the plan of Hooker's company, having effected an arrangement with the patentees, and secured a Commission

[1] "Holland Documents," in *Doc. Rel. to the Colonial History of New York*, I: 128.

for a provisional government, to purchase the land from the Indians. They could then assert their right by patent and purchase to all the land between Windsor and Wethersfield, including that occupied by the Dutch. The sequel shows that such a claim was made before Hooker arrived, and, in due time, the majority of the settlers of 1636 located on the land south of the Little River.

The counter claims made by the Dutch will be examined more minutely hereafter. It is sufficient, here, to define their boundaries. As stated in their own records, they claimed the "flat extending about one league down along the river, and one-third of a league in width to the high land, and beyond the hill upwards, being a flat extending to the next adjoining little stream."[1] Another version informs us that the "one league down along the river," was measured "across through the wood." In this direction were their "bouwerie" or garden, hay land and wood lot. The "next adjoining little stream" was Folly Brook. It was "about one league" from this brook northward to the "Kill" [creek] or Little River. Beyond this the tract extended a "musket shot" up Connecticut River, thus including the land projecting southward, since known as "Dutch Point." This low land was directly east of the House of Hope. The northern boundary of the Dutchmen's claim, therefore, was the Little River, and a line projected eastward from its bend across to the Connecticut River.

The original conveyance, from the Indians to the founders of Hartford, has long since disappeared. The deed by which Sequassen's successors, in 1670, confirmed it, contains one statement that has an important bearing on the sequence of events and the settlement that was made under the Warwick Patent. It states that the original purchase was made by Mr. Samuel Stone and Mr. William Goodwin "about the yeare sixteen hundred thirty-six." Dr. Trumbull says "in 1635 or 1636." The English repeatedly asserted, in their controversy with the Dutch, that they had purchased the disputed lands before their settlement upon them. There is no reason to deny this statement.

[1] *Ibid.*, II: 139, 140; *Mem. Hist. ofHartford County*, I: 13.

The above words of Lord Saye and Sele confirm it. If we admit it, however, the query is suggested, in view of the circumstances, whether this purchase was not made early in the spring, just before or just after the beginning of the year, old style. If it was, then Rev. Samuel Stone removed to Suckiaug early that season, perhaps with the intention of making such a purchase before the arrival of Hooker's company, his associate in that business, Elder Goodwin, being already there. Let us consider the circumstances that are reconciled by this supposition. The reader must judge whether the evidence warrants its acceptance as a fact.

There was a Newtown party that removed to Suckiaug early in the spring of 1636. Historians of repute have made this statement. The documentary evidence concerns, principally, John White and Samuel Wakeman. The former was a prominent settler. He was, later, chosen ruling elder of the Second Church of Christ. He sold his home at Newtown, October 20, 1635, and was then of that town. When he executed a conveyance of land, however, on May 30, 1636, he was "of the New Towne vppo Quinetucquet River." As Thomas Hooker's company did not start until May 31st, John White certainly removed before that date and probably early in the season. Samuel Wakeman was sworn constable of Newtown plantation, April 26, 1636. There is no trace of his presence among the pioneers. He was probably a recent arrival. As to Samuel Stone, he had sold his Newtown home before February 8, 1635–6, to Roger Harlackenden, Esq., of Shepard's company. Although we know of no evidence of his subsequent residence there, he doubtless spent the winter in Cambridge, in the performance of his duties. Winthrop does not mention his departure with Thomas Hooker's company, nor does Goodwin note his arrival with the pastor. Yet he was actively connected with the emigrants' plans in the removal. At his house the meeting with Shepard's company was held, and, on several occasions later, he represented the settlers in an executive capacity. This is admitted to be negative evidence, of little value considered alone. It surely would have been a natural and wise pro-

cedure, under the circumstances, to send Samuel Stone early in the spring to Suckiaug, with John White, Samuel Wakeman and perhaps others. They intended to inaugurate the provisional government at once. Its first court was held April 26th. John Winthrop, Jr., set out in March, to assume his responsibilities at Saybrook. It must have been evident that the declaration of their rights under the patent could not wait upon their convenience. The issue with the Dutch rested entirely with the Newtown emigrants. Neither Windsor nor Wethersfield had any claim to advance to the land south of the Little River. The pioneers were well settled on the north-side. It naturally devolved upon some one from Newtown, with a show of authority, to advance their claim under the patent, and, "to obviate all difficulties," the purchase of the land from the natives was necessary.

These are not the only circumstances that lead to such a conclusion. We have evidence that the English had, before Hooker's arrival, asserted their patent rights, and had presumably taken such action under them that the Dutch made a formal protest against them as trespassers. On June 22, 1636, Elder William Goodwin, dating his letter from Suckiaug, wrote to Governor John Winthrop, Jr., at Saybrook fort, as follows: "I am requested by our neighbores the Dutchmen to mind you of what you willed me to tell them, viz., that if they thought good to call to you as they went out [of the river] with ther sloope (and did desire so much of you) you would then giue them answer in wryteing to ther protest. The Sirgion is now going to ther plantation [Manhattan] and meaneth to come to you about it, and desired me to signifie so much vnto your worship, which is all I haue at this tyme." The postscript of this letter advises Winthrop of the arrival of Hooker.[1]

It is clear that the protest of the Dutch had been made some time before Goodwin wrote as above. He and Winthrop had met at Saybrook or Suckiaug, or information concerning the protest had been transmitted to Winthrop, and an answer had been returned. Apparently also the Dutch had been waiting some time, for a convenient occa-

[1] *4 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, VII: 44.

sion to call at Saybrook fort as they went out of the river in their sloop. Moreover, the protest had doubtless been called forth by some overt act of settlement on the part of the English. It would seem that they had entered upon the land that the Dutch claimed, and had justified their act on the ground that they had rights there under the Warwick Patent, and by purchase from the Indians. This situation alone would have made it proper for the Suckiaug settlers to refer the matter to Governor Winthrop, the regent under the patentee, and for the Dutch to seek from him an answer to their protest, in writing, to be forwarded, no doubt, on their arrival at Manhattan, to their superiors of the West India Company. The Dutch had made no protest against the occupation of the land north of the Little River. It was outside of their bounds. Entrance by another party upon their land, held for years by occupancy and purchase, was quite a different matter. It seems almost to have been a part of the program, previously arranged between the settlers and Governor Winthrop at Saybrook, that the issue should be forced early in the season — an issue foreseen and unavoidable, if their rights under the Warwick Patent, in which, we do not doubt, they honestly trusted, were of any value.

Is there any evidence of an overt act of settlement upon the Dutchmen's land, which would call forth this protest? The Hartford land records seem to give us an answer. If John White and Samuel Wakeman were like all other planters, their first concern was to secure eligible house-lots for themselves. They could have done so among the pioneers north of the Little River. There was land enough and to spare, as desirable as any that had been chosen. We do not find them there. As already stated, one of the principal highways of the pioneers' settlement was the "Road from the Little River to the North Meadow," now named Front Street. At its southern end, there was a fordway, crossing the Little River. It is here that we find the two emigrants, who had arrived in the spring of 1636, settled on the South-side, making a beginning of that plantation. John White is on the east side of the path or road to Wethersfield, and Samuel Wakeman on the west side, beyond

William Hills, who occupied the corner lot. Apparently, these adventurous scouts had boldly, and with design, crossed the Little River, and settled on the Dutchmen's land. They doubtless believed that they had a lawful right there, and considered it their own promised Canaan. Samuel Wakeman was soon sworn constable. Under the circumstances, it was a suitable residence for an officer of defence. We may even suspect that it was his post of danger, in case of trouble with the Dutch, that suggested his appointment. Yet this settlement on the Dutchmen's land was precisely what some of Thomas Hooker's company intended to do, and did, upon their arrival. It did not matter how soon the issue was made. They could not settle under the Warwick Patent and avoid it.

If, therefore, these two settlers did locate their lots within the Dutchmen's claim, with William Hills and possibly others, in the spring of 1636, thus giving good reasons for the above protest, and it is true, as the English afterward asserted, that they had purchased the land from the Indians before any such settlement was made, then Samuel Stone, who, with William Goodwin, bought the land, must have been a member of this springtime company.

The reader, who has a sense of the humorous, can hardly suppress a smile at this exhibition of the traditional shrewdness of the Connecticut Yankee, in the character of our forefathers. The patentees had forced them into a position where they were obliged to accept settlement under the Warwick Patent. They did so, without incurring any obligation of allegiance to the patentees' governor. And yet, these settlers, either by design or chance, at once made an issue with their neighbors, that could only be defended on the ground of a superior patent right. When the Dutch made a protest against them as trespassers, they received it with equanimity, and referred them to His Excellency at Saybrook fort, while they went calmly about their business of ploughing and sowing the Dutchmen's fields.

The English occupied and divided among themselves the land south of the Little River, where they founded the South-side Plantation. They allowed their neighbors to

continue in possession of such parcels as they had put to use. There the matter was allowed to rest for a time. We do not know of any better statement of the case than has been given by an early Dutch writer in the following language: "It finally came to pass that they [the English] arrived on the above-mentioned river in the years 1635 and 1636, with numbers of families and cattle, established themselves there, far and near, even on the land situate around and by our fort, and belonging to us, which land they have divided among themselves, endeavoring to prescribe laws to us, because they, having built a house or two at the mouth of the river pretended thereby to have the key thereof." [1]

Here we lose sight of their differences, until 1639, and our story is continued in a later chapter. The patentees were not allowed to forget their responsibilities toward the river plantations. In 1642, Lord Saye and Sele, Sir Richard Saltonstall, and the Earl of Warwick, came loyally to the assistance of the colonists in the defence of their rights. If we only had some reminiscences by the younger Governor Winthrop, it is probable that our chapter would not lack a most entertaining conclusion. His authority dwindled very rapidly. In the latter part of March, his honored father addressed him as "Governour of Conecticott." Within a month, he changed the title to "Governor of the new Plantation upon Connecticutt," which was sufficiently indefinite. In June, however, when Thomas Hooker's company were well on the way, he had become simply "Governor of the Plantation upon the mouth of the Conecticot." These changing titles furnish a good illustration of what actually took place. Winthrop came to Connecticut to represent the patentees. He gave the settlers such standing and defence as he could; but he quietly turned over to them the authority of government. We cannot doubt that in doing so, he was conforming to the known wishes of his superiors. He soon relinquished his post, returned to Boston, and, with grace and honor, withdrew from such perplexing responsibilities, concluding, no doubt, that the river plantations could look after their own interests. We have a strong conviction that he fully understood, from the

[1] "Report and Advice," in O'Callaghan's *Hist. of New Netherland*, I: 421.

first, the purpose of the play that had thus been put upon the stage, and enjoyed the rôle that had been assigned to him, as the friend of the colonists. He served them well. After the curtain had fallen, they were glad to have him settle down at Pequot and participate in the blessings that the Warwick Patent, which has yet to be discovered, had been the means of bestowing upon the people of Connecticut.

CHAPTER III

THE PILGRIMAGE OF THOMAS HOOKER

The distinctive features of the settlement of Hartford were: the wisdom that characterized the removal of its founders, the dual establishment of the plantation, and its early organization of town government. In these respects, Hartford has a right to claim honor among her sister towns, though she must yield to Windsor and Wethersfield in priority of settlement.

It is clearly an error to speak of the company that Thomas Hooker personally conducted as making the beginning of the Suckiaug plantation. It was begun in 1635. The Newtown emigrants did not trust to the fortunes, which one party might expect to encounter in the wilderness. After two companies had gone forward to prepare the way, the main body followed. In the larger sense, they may all be included in Hooker's company. Each party was chosen to fill an honorable place in our history.

Nor did the success of the removal depend upon any one man. Thomas Hooker seems to have been most concerned, personally, with the larger interests of the movement. When great principles were under discussion — such as their right to remove, and the organization of government — he looms up like an ancient prophet. He had inspired the emigration. As a minister he was its attracting force. Yet, in carrying out their plans, he trusted to others, who shared his confidence. Samuel Stone, on several occasions, was the man of practical affairs. Other settlers, such as Goodwin, Steele and Westwood, were well fitted for the service to which they were appointed. Many others, whose names are familiar, contributed to the success of their venture. Still a master-mind was in control of the movement, through the sway of personal influence. This was the great and merited honor due Thomas Hooker.

In the spring of 1636, there was general anxiety among the main company to hasten their departure. Aside from the natural rivalry between emigrating towns, there were urgent reasons for haste in the season's labors.[1] The settlers had to clear away the forest, break up the virgin soil, gather fodder for the winter and prepare shelter for themselves and their cattle. Yet they experienced delays. In a letter of April 26th, Winthrop says: "Mr. Hooker and his company intend to set forth three weeks hence." Their date then was May 17th. Some of them did not sell their homes before that month. Perhaps they were also delayed in securing transportation by water for their goods. Of that season, Lion Gardiner at Saybrook wrote: "Heare hath come many vessels with provision to goe vp to the plantations." We surmise, however, that they may have thought it wise to make their journey during the pleasant days of summer. There were gentle women among them, unaccustomed to hardships in the forest, and mothers with their little children. None of our modern conveniences for camp life were known to them. They were to cook and eat their humble fare by the wayside; find shelter from dew and rain under overhanging boughs, and go to their rest in the ominous darkness, on the matted needles of ancient pines. Surely the shepherd that led forth that flock may have wisely sought the favor of nature's best season.

The day of their departure was Tuesday, May 31, 1636, Winthrop places it under that date in his history. In a letter, also, of June 10th, he distinctly says: "Mr. Hooker went hence upon Tuesday the last day of May."

How many were numbered in this company, and of whom did it consist? The only statement we have as to their number is that there were "about an hundred persons." This expression, if we accept its authority, is indefinite. It may mean some more than one hundred. In the writer's opinion, the company did considerably exceed that. Such

[1] The Dorchester people returned early to Windsor. "A great part" of their old church had "gone to Connecticut" by April 1st. Pynchon's company from Roxbury went early to Springfield. They planned to ship their goods on the *Blessing* "as soon as she can be laden" after April 14th. Their records at Agawam begin with May 14th. Winthrop's *History*, I: 218, 219, 465.

a party could not have included, by a liberal estimate, more than thirty-five settlers, the remainder being wives, children and servants. This centenary number must have had the room that the *Mayflower* is said to have given to furniture, to accommodate all the ancestors for whom the honor has been claimed. The list of Newtown householders, February 8, 1635–6, must be the basis of a census. The location of settlers' house-lots at Hartford is also of value, for the majority who came in 1636, settled on the South-side. As a rule, arrivals after that year had lots in the suburbs. The following list of those who were members of the Newtown congregation, and are thought to have removed in Hooker's company, makes no pretense of being other than what a careful and unprejudiced study of the records seems to the author to warrant. It includes those who probably secured lots at Suckiaug in 1635, and returned to Newtown. The order follows the list of proprietors of Hartford, except as to Thomas Hooker himself.

Mr. Thomas Hooker, Mr. Mathew Allyn, John Talcott, James Olmsted, William Wadsworth, William Lewis, Timothy Stanley, Edward Stebbins, John Pratt, William Ruscoe, James Ensign, John Hopkins, George Steele, Stephen Post, Thomas Judd, Thomas Lord, Sen., John Stone, Richard Lord, John Maynard, Jeremy Adams, Samuel Greenhill, Robert Day, Nathaniel Richards, Joseph Mygatt, Richard Butler, John Arnold, Thomas Bull, George Stocking, Seth Grant, Richard Olmsted, Joseph Easton, Clement Chaplin, Thomas Lord, Jr., John Olmsted and Samuel Whitehead.

There were others, however, who came from Massachusetts towns, or soon after their arrival from England, and doubtless became settlers of Hartford in 1636. Such were Thomas Welles — who is said to have come from Saybrook — John Webster and William Whiting. The location of lots gives reason to believe that the following came that season — perhaps some of them with Hooker: Andrew Bacon, John Baysey, George Grave, William Hyde, Richard Lyman, John Marsh, John Moody, William Parker, John Skinner, Arthur Smith, Nathaniel Ward, John Wilcox and Gregory Wolterton. Thomas Stanton was in Connecticut

The Pilgrimage of Thomas Hooker

in 1637, and perhaps secured his lot earlier, through his father-in-law, Thomas Lord. A number of young men, also, arrived late in 1636, or early in 1637, for they were soldiers in the Pequot War. William Gibbons, steward of George Wyllys, who followed in 1638, is said to have arrived in 1636, "with twenty men," to erect Wyllys's house and prepare his fields. Our inability to identify any of this company awakens the suspicion that some of them may have been among the soldiers of 1637, and later may have received land by the town's courtesy. Some of the most prominent members of Hooker's congregation were detained at Newtown. Benjamin Burr and Thomas Hosmer seem to have been there June 6, 1636, but probably followed that season. William Andrews, William Blumfield, John Clarke, John Haynes, Thomas Spencer and Andrew Warner removed early in 1637, and William Spencer in 1638. Edward Hopkins had an early reservation of a house-lot, but arrived in 1637. Surely the number that came to Hartford in 1636 has been underestimated. In view of this conclusion, we can better appreciate the effect of declining emigration, and the protest of Thomas Hooker, in 1638, at the efforts of some at the Bay to discourage the movement.

There are only two original authorities as to the details of Thomas Hooker's pilgrimage. These demand a critical examination. In the course of time, they have received such embellishments that the present popular impression of that journey is unworthy of credence. Winthrop's story is confined to the following paragraph:

"Mr. Hooker, pastor of the church of Newtown, and most of his congregation, went to Connecticut. His wife was carried in a horse litter; and they drove one hundred and sixty cattle, and fed of their milk by the way." [1]

In one of Winthrop's letters, we have this additional information:

"With that company, viz — by Tho. Bull and a man of mine own, I sent six cows, four steers and a bull." [2]

These cattle were to be sent on to his son at Saybrook, and were doubtless delivered there soon after the company

[1] Winthrop's *History*, I: 223.
[2] *Ibid.*, I: 468.

arrived.[1] The details of this narrative are valuable, and worthy of entire confidence.

Our second authority is Cotton Mather, who wrote, in the *Magnalia*, as follows: "Reader, come with me now to behold some worthy, and learned, and genteel persons going to be buried alive on the banks of Connecticut, having been first slain by the ecclesiastical impositions and persecutions of Europe. . . . Accordingly, in the month of June, 1636, they removed an hundred miles to the westward, with the purpose to settle upon the delightful banks of the Connecticut River; and there were about an hundred persons in the first company that made this removal; who not being able to walk above ten miles a day took up near a fortnight in the journey, having no pillows to take their nightly rest upon, but such as their father Jacob found in the way to Padan-Aram." [2]

Cotton Mather was the original authority for the embellished narrative, which Governor Thomas Hutchinson recorded in his history, published in 1764. From the latter historian, our popular misconceptions of Thomas Hooker's pilgrimage have been derived.[3] Hutchinson's version is as follows:

"They did not take their departure until June the next year, and then about an hundred perfons in the firft company, fome of them had lived in fplendour and delicacy in England, fet out on foot to travel an hundred and twenty or thirty miles with their wives and children, near a fortnights journey, having no pillars but Jacob's, and no canopy but the heavens, a wildernefs to go thro' without the leaft cultivation, in moft places no path nor any marks to guide them, depending upon the compafs to fteer by, many hideous fwamps and very high mountains, befide five or

[1] Probably the men who delivered this herd were the "bretheren," referred to in Goodwin's letter of June 22nd to Winthrop.

[2] Mather's *Magnalia*, edn. 1855, I: 81, 342.

[3] Dr. Samuel Mather wrote a letter, in 1784, to his son Samuel, in which he said, of certain manuscripts, "I lent [them] to your careless Uncle, Mr. Hutchinson, and, as I suppose, they are irrecoverably lost and gone: I furnished him, as I suppose you know, with most of the Materials, of which his History was composed: And I am sorry that he made no better use of them: For he has misrepresented and misapplied several Things, of which I had given him better Information" — Mather's *History of King Philip's War*, 1862, p. xxii.

fix rivers, or different parts of the fame winding river (the Chickapi) not every where fordable, which they could not avoid." [1]

It will be evident to any one who compares these narratives, that Hutchinson added several details, which he doubtless considered true, one of which was wholly false. That he said the company crossed the Chicopee river five or six times, was a natural error, as he evidently thought their route was as the "new way" ran, which was discovered in 1648 and used in his own time.[2] But when he stated that there was "in most places no path, nor any marks to guide them," and that they journeyed "depending upon the compass to steer by," he wrote as one entirely ignorant of the early customs of travel in New England. The schoolboy who knows the primeval forest, will hardly believe that this company of intelligent men, skilled in woodcraft, encumbered by burdens of goods and provisions, driving one hundred and sixty cattle, with sheep and swine and fowls, having in charge an invalid's litter and mothers with toddling children, took their journey through a pathless forest,

[1] Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts Bay*, I: 45.

[2] This "new way" went through Watertown and Waltham, diverged from the "old way" in Weston, led west through Wayland, across Sudbury marsh and river, through Sudbury, Marlborough, Worcester, Brookfield and Brimfield to the Quabaug or Chicopee river, which it crossed "four or five times," passing through Palmer on the north side of the river, across it again to the south side, and on to Springfield. Nashaway planters petitioned for a way across Sudbury river in 1645 (*Mass. Arch.* CXXI: 5). In 1648, Winthrop wrote: "This year a new way was found out to Connecticut, by Nashoway, which avoided much of the hilly way" (Winthrop's *History*, II: 396). John Eliot probably discovered it, and in 1649 followed it to Quabaug (*3 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, IV: 123, 125). John Prescott, of Lancaster, worked on the eastern section two seasons (*Mass. Arch.*, CXXI: 31). Farms were laid out along it in 1662 (*Mass. Arch.*, XXXIII: 22; XLV: 107; *Proprietary Rec. of Worcester*, pp. 21, 23). The General Court ordered highways in the eastern section in 1653 (*Mass. Col. Rec.*, III: 303). In 1673 the County Court, on Marlborough's petition, ordered a highway laid out westward to Quabaug, which was done in 1674 (*Middlesex County Court Records*, 1671–1680, pp. 77, 101; *Mass. Arch.*, CXXI: 92) In 1700 it was "the stated Rhode to Conetticot, especially Betwixt Wooster & Brookfield," but hazardous (*Mass. Arch.*, CXXI: 101). On March 7, 1731–2 the Hampshire County Court ordered it laid out as a highway from Springfield to Brookfield, and the layout was reported May 16, 1732 (*Hampshire County Court Records*, II: 143, 149, 165). It was the main road to Boston from Springfield until recent times. Gov. Hutchinson's uncle, Edward, owned a tract of land on the Quabaug river, and he probably knew the road (*Mass. Acts and Resolves*, XI: 423, 727; XXII: 252).

"depending upon the compass to steer by," especially as they did not then know the course to Hartford. It would have been a foolhardy undertaking, quite impossible of accomplishment. Only imagine Thomas Bull, with "six cows, four steers and a bull," endeavoring to find a course for his charge, west southwest, up hill and down dale, around fallen trees and through tangled undergrowth, halted abruptly by a fordless river and running head on into an impenetrable swamp! Does any one suppose that Goody Grundy could have steered her pigs, by a compass, to Hartford in a fortnight? That instrument was sometimes used to show the right path where they diverged, or the traveller was lost, but rarely, except by surveyors, to navigate the New England forests. The herd followed one another, as they would soon learn to do, in a beaten path. It had been trodden that season by several other companies with cattle. Along such a way it would have been comparatively easy for a horse litter to travel, nor would a litter have been altogether uncomfortable.[1] There were landmarks, too, some of them known to this day. Indian villages were located here and there, providing food and shelter in need, as many an early pilgrim to Connecticut had reason to know. In Hooker's company, there were doubtless a half dozen or more men, who had made the journey several times. There were friendly Indians to guide the party, if necessary. Hutchinson was justified, however, in the purpose that led him astray — the laudation of the heroic features of this pilgrimage. It was an arduous journey. Their path led them over "high mountains" and through "hideous swamps." It was long and rough, the travelling of which, even now, augments our respect for the physical endurance of those pilgrims, who followed it so long ago.

In order to appreciate the experiences of Thomas Hooker's company we must imagine ourselves to be living in the conditions of his time. There were then few country roads

[1] A horse litter was framed of "two long ash poles, with slats fastened across the middle, the forward ends attached to the horse's saddle-girths, and the hind ends dragging on the ground or fastened to the girths of another horse." Daniels's *Hist. of Oxford*, p. 81.

in the Bay Colony, and those connected settled communities. The only overland ways to distant regions were by Indian paths. Most of these had long been used by the natives. In some places, they were worn deep in the earth. Such paths offered the white man great advantages. They were not only a sure guide to his destination, but they also followed the higher land, keeping clear of swamps, where it was possible, and leading to fordways across the rivers. Along these paths, the Indians brought news of distant localities, desirable for settlement. At first, a few daring adventurers followed them into the wilderness to explore. Then, white families, singly or in small parties, pushed out toward the frontier, and built in some favorable place their log cabins. As their settlement grew, the path was widened. It soon became a road, along which civilization went and came. The story of its development is told by the very names applied to it. First, it was a mere "trail"; then, an Indian "path"; by and by, the "country road" of the pioneers, and, at last, the "highway" of a settled township. It was the custom to locate early grants of land along these Indian paths, the tract being bounded, frequently, by the path on one side. To this fact, we owe most of our knowledge of their course. Some of them have been accurately determined, and the ancient path or road, which would otherwise have escaped observation, has been discovered.

The Indian path to the Connecticut River, in 1636, was familiar to the English. There cannot be any doubt that along it Thomas Hooker's company made their journey. Wahginnacut, "a sagamore upon the River Quonehtacut," sachem at East Windsor, probably followed it when he visited Boston, in 1631. He informed Governor Winthrop that it was "not above five days' journey by land" to his country.[1] Along this path, John Oldham went and came several times. In 1633, he and "three with him went overland to Connecticut to trade."[2] "He lodged at Indian towns all the way." His route is identified, in part, by that fact, and the statement that he brought back some speci-

[1] Winthrop's *History*, I: 62; De Forest's *History of the Indians of Connecticut*, p. 73.

[2] Winthrop's *History*, I: 132.

mens of black lead, "whereof, the Indians told him, there was a whole rock." This could have been none other than Leadmine Hill, in Sturbridge. The General Court, in 1644, made a grant to John Winthrop, Jr. of "y^e^ hill at Tantousq, about 60 miles west ward, in which the black lead is." [1] On his journey the following year, when he intended to go to Mohegan "by the way of Tantiusques, to the black lead mine," he missed his way, and found that he was "going in a direct course towards Agawam." [2] His descendants doubtless regretted the grant, as they buried a deal of money there, mining black lead.

In 1642, Nathaniel Woodward and Solomon Saffery, surveyors, in their work of establishing the southern boundary of the Massachusetts patent, made a map on which their route to Connecticut is indicated by a line. This shows their general course, and at several points, they recorded data as to their location. These coincide with the conclusions of antiquaries, sufficiently to prove that these surveyors travelled along this familiar path, and that it passed certain identified landmarks.[3] The course of these surveyors led them to the earliest crossing of the Connecticut River, at Bissell's old ferry, in Windsor.

This ancient Indian path received, in early times, two names. One was given to it by the English, on Connecticut River. It was the "Bay Path." The inhabitants of Springfield, in 1646, voted to give liberty "to gather candlewood in ye playne in ye Bay path." In 1647, they ordered "a Horse way over the meddow to ye Bay path." The other name was the more natural designation of the English about Boston. It was the "Connecticut Path." After the "new way" was discovered, the former was sometimes distinguished as the "Old Bay Path," or "Old Connecticut Path." In 1674, Major Daniel Gookin described Hassanemesit [Grafton] as lying "about two miles to the east-

[1] *Mass. Col. Rec.*, II: 82; *Proc. Am. Antiq. Soc., New Ser.*, XIV: 471 ff.

[2] *2 Ser. Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, VIII: 7–12; *The Hartford Courant*, Dec. 22, 1892.

[3] "Woodward's and Saffery's Map of 1642"—*Mass. Archives.* Published in Ammidown's *Hist. Coll.*, I: 294; and Bowen's *Boundary Disputes of Conn.*, p. 19. See "Interpretation of Woodward's and Saffery's Map," by Levi B. Chase, of Sturbridge, in *N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg.*, April, 1901; and *Quinabaug Hist. Soc. Leaflets*, Vol. I., No. 7.

ward of Nipmuck [Blackstone] river and near unto the old road way to Connecticut." Confusion has arisen from the indiscriminate application of these names to all of the three main routes, of later years, between Boston and Connecticut towns.[1] In 1636, the path that Thomas Hooker's company followed was the only one used by the English, and so continued for a dozen years. It was the "ordinary way" that Ludlow and Pynchon took to Boston in 1637, when Hooker and Stone went by the way of Providence, along the "Pequot Path" from the Connecticut River. There was no better authority on this subject in early times, than Rev. John Eliot, the "Apostle to the Indians." In 1650, he wrote of Springfield as follows: "And this towne ouerland from the Bay layeth: 80: or: 90: myles South-west, and is the roade way to all the townes upon this river, and [that] lye more Southward."[2] It is with this "Old Bay Path" that the journeys of the founders of Hartford must be associated, and when we consider that a dozen or more parties had already travelled it, we realize the absurdity of supposing that Thomas Hooker's company would attempt to follow an untrodden course through the forest.

[1] The third route, via Woodstock, inherited the name "Connecticut Path." It was not an early through route, but was developed for such travel, partly out of sections of older paths, and became the main road from Hartford to Boston. Mendon was laid out on both sides of the Nipmuck path. Such a direct route was possibly in mind, in 1644, when the Commissioners of the United Colonies appointed Edward Hopkins "to fynd & lay out the best way to the Bay," but the "new way," via Brookfield, being soon afterwards discovered, the purpose was not accomplished. (*Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 25; X: 108; *Mass. Arch.*, CXXI: 31). Ephraim Curtis, in 1675, conducted Uncas on his way to Mohegan through Natick, Marlborough, Hassanemesit [Grafton], Manshage [Oxford], Mayenecket [Dudley] and across the Quinabaug river to Senexit Meadow in Woodstock (*Mass. Arch.*, LXVII: 214). The settlement of Wabbaquasset, designed in 1682, made a road thither necessary, and apparently suggested "a better & nearer way" to Connecticut, which the General Court, March 30, 1683, empowered Major Pynchon to "lay out and mark" (*Mass. Col. Rec.*, V: 394; *Mass. Arch.* CXXI: 61). On its part, Connecticut took similar action for a road to the uplands, and in 1705, there was such a road from Woodstock to Hartford in general use, as shown by Chandler's map (*Mohegan Case*, p. 49). It passed through Ashford and entered the Connecticut valley through Bolton Notch. Judge Samuel Sewall came that way to Hartford, in 1718 (*5 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, VII: 195). In 1724, the Connecticut General Assembly ordered a highway "laid out and markt" on the most convenient ground and straightest course from Hartford towards Boston" (*Conn. Col. Rec.* VI: 506). This was thereafter and until recent times the "Old Connecticut Road."

[2] *2 Ser. Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, II: 49; Green's *Hist. of Springfield*, p. 4.

We purpose now to attend Hooker's company on their pilgrimage from their Newtown home to Hartford. At last, their appointed day of departure arrived. All were ready. We may think of them as gathered at the sunrise hour on the north bank of the Charles River, where their pathway began. Perhaps the conch shell blew a signal, or some hardy guide fired his trusty rifle into the air: but, if we may judge them by their tearful farewells to old England, or their practice only a year later, when their pastor gave them his blessing, as their bravest warriors pushed their shallops out into the current of the Connecticut, the excitement of departure was hushed, and they stood with bowed heads, as their reverend leader commended them to the direction of Jehovah, who had guided a trusting Israel through the wilderness.

It was a long and straggling procession that took the road westward, through Watertown. Some stalwart pioneer on horseback led the way, and guides with him made up the vanguard. Perhaps the cattle and flocks came next, driven by herders, Thomas Bull very likely in command. Then, in families or groups, as they chose, they followed one another — chivalrous husbands helping their mates, children in laughing parties, the lady's horse litter attended by her maids, their pastor with staff and pack, the elders in his company, and, in the rear, the lingering young men, who plucked many a flower by the wayside, to gladden loving eyes. We can see them now, and hear the music of the cow-bells and cheer of their voices, as they move along arrayed in their homespun of simple Puritan fashion — as noble a company as were ever guided by the star of empire.

Of their Watertown neighbors, some had gone before. There would be messages committed to the pilgrims, to carry to friends at Wethersfield. The road for some miles was "the way into the country" that many of them knew. Here and there farms had been already granted. By and by, the log cabins were few, as they passed out of inhabited bounds into the wilderness. If the company journeyed about ten miles a day, as Mather suggests, it was somewhere near the western border of Waltham that the guides halted beside some spring or brook, and began to prepare their

camp. The cattle were gathered in some natural enclosure, and the herders began their milking. Then the parties arrived, one by one, weary, footsore and hungry, and made ready the sylvan chamber of their choice. Out of the kettle that hung over the blazing camp-fire, they received into great porringers of milk their "corn meal mush," which must have been their staple fare; and all were satisfied. Then, as the shadows of the forest enshrouded them, their pastor lifted his voice in grateful prayer, the watch was set, their laughter subsided into whispers — it was night and the pilgrims slept. Thus the days and nights followed one another with their favors.

The Connecticut Path, avoiding the lowlands along Sudbury River, led through Weston, Wayland and Framingham, passing north of Cochituate Pond. Then it turned southward through the present borders of South Framingham, Ashland, Hopkinton and Westborough to Grafton.[1] Here was Hassanemesit, an Indian village of Eliot fame. In early times, it was a favorite lodging-place. Governor John Winthrop, Jr., spent the night there in 1645. Two or three miles further the path crossed "Nipnet" or Blackstone River, one of the points that Woodward and Saffery marked on their map. Following on through the present town of Millbury, north of Singletary Pond, it entered the bounds of Oxford, turning to the westward at the Center, and going through Charlton, where its ancient name was the "Quabaug Path." [2]

[1] Hudson's *Hist. of Sudbury*, pp. 5–7; Temple's *Hist. of Framingham*, pp. 80–82, 87, 89; Daniels's *Hist. of Oxford*, p. 9; Benedict's *Hist. of Sutton*, pp. 18, 21, 22. Another way led through Newton, diverging from the Dedham road, crossing the Charles River at the Upper Falls and passing through Needham and Natick to Grafton, where it joined the Connecticut Path. The surveyors of 1642 seem to have gone that way. It was nearer for the Dorchester emigrants. It was "the moſt convenient paſſage toward Conecticute," says a Dedham petition, "for all y^e^ Plantations beyond Neponſit." It was thought about 1652 that "it will prove the beſt way from Boston to Naſhaway & other plantations to be erected in those parts as alſo for the Southerne plantations Northward" (*Mass. Arch.*, CXXI: 26, 226, 231). The later use of this path was increased by Eliot's Indian village at Natick.

[2] Along this section for some miles, stone markers have been set by the Quinabaug Historical Society, where Mr. Levi B. Chase of Sturbridge has discovered the path by the means of land records. These markers are inscribed "Bay Path 1633." On certain hillsides and at fordways, the old road is distinctly visible. See Chase's

Along this path Thomas Hooker's company journeyed, day after day, until the Sabbath offered them a much needed rest. No place on their route seems more likely, in a computation of their progress, or more pleasing to the imagination, as their forest sanctuary, than the western slope of Fisk Hill in Sturbridge. Hither their path certainly led, and here tradition locates an ancient camping place. It may be fitly named "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," for two fragments of an immense boulder, five feet high, were probably in early times the side walls of the traveller's hut. On a rise of ground, there once stood a wide-spreading tree. Not far away, is a never-failing spring. An Indian path diverging here to the southward, led through Woodstock to Mohegan. In the near view to the southwest, is Leadmine Hill, for this is Tantiusque, the ancient Indian gateway to the west. Here, also, in 1715, Governor Gurdon Saltonstall located the corner of his grant of two thousand acres, running his lines to take in all the best land of this beautiful valley. Far away on the horizon, is Steerage Rock, which the pilgrim company must pass as they descend to the Quabaug River, which leads them on to Springfield. To the northward, is the "Hilly Country," which this path has turned southward to avoid. It was so named on the surveyors' map in 1642. On that Sabbath in 1636, the view on all sides was draped in many tints of summer green, and, underneath the cathedral arches of the forest, perhaps with friendly Indian attendants from nearby villages, this Puritan company worshipped, with prayer and praise, their Jehovah who had led them hitherto.

The path leads on down the slope westward, over the brook, along the foot of Cemetery Hill, across "Old Tantiusque Fordway" and up the valley through Fiskdale. It passes the southeast corner of John Eliot's grant of four thousand acres, called "Potepog." Here he proposed to establish another Natick of "Praying Indians." Their prayers were interrupted by King Philip's War, but that did not invalidate the apostle's title to the land. Along this section of the way, there were once many Indian vil-

"Early Indian Trails through Tantiusque," etc., in *Quinabaug Historical Society Leaflets*, Vol. I, No. 6 and No. 7.

An Early Camping Place on the Bay Path
Fisk Hill, Sturbridge, Mass.

The Country Road at Namerick Brook
Used before 1662

lages. The path passed north of Little Alum Pond, where the records fix it, on to "Little Rest," and north of Sherman Pond. Here was that famous Indian stronghold, known as "Quabaug Old Fort." As the path passes north of Steerage Rock and descends the slope, the Quabaug or Chicopee River is seen, winding its way through the valley westward. Here the "old road" has been traced by land grants, and the site of Richard Fellows's tavern, established in 1657 as "a house for travellers," has been marked. We can imagine the Newtown pilgrims, inured to travel and hardship, hastening onward with reviving spirits, as they drew near to Agawam. They scented with delight the aroma of the trees, as they passed over the "Pine Plains" which the surveyors of 1642 noted, and ere long they reached the summit of the hill where the path broke from the forest's shade into the plantation's clearing. Thus the glories of the Connecticut valley, of which they had so often dreamed, burst upon their view, and they were among their friends of Roxbury.

The portion of Hooker's route, that is of greatest interest to his company's descendants, is that from Springfield to Hartford. Here there can be no doubt as to the location of the Bay Path. It passed through the usual stages of development, from an Indian trail to the "country road," and finally to a highway.[1] At the upper end of Longmeadow where the shoulder of the hill is only a short distance from the river, was "Longmeadow Gate." Through this the path led southward. It was sometimes called "Longmeadow Path." In 1682, the road to Freshwater River was laid out on the upland and the old road through the meadow was abandoned. The railroad now runs about where the old path or road was, north of Longmeadow station. South of this the railroad diverges to the west, and traces of the old road can be seen on the east. In 1664, the County Court appointed a committee to consider the lay-out of this old road as a highway. The record of their action specifies the route as follows:

"From y^e^ lower end of Springfield to long Meddow gate, running where it now doth, in breadth ffour rods, & from

[1] *The Bay Path*, by Dr. J. G. Holland, pp. 401, 406, 407.

y^e^ long Meddow gate to the bridge y^e^ lower end of by the Rivers bank shal be in breadth two rods, & from y^e^ lower end of the Said Meddow into fresh water River, soe called, as the way now runs, ffourr rodds, & from thence to Namerick, where John Bissell had a barn standing, as now y^e^ way runs twenty rods, & from thence to Namerick brook where will best suite for a bridge, two rodds, & from thence to y^e^ dividing lyne betweene the Collonyes, where y^e^ horse way now lyes, two rodds." [1]

The latter part of this lay-out refers to the road within the present bounds of Connecticut. At Namerick Brook, the records and topography afford the best opportunity to locate the way, into which the Bay Path was soon developed by the early use of settlers' carts. It is most convenient to trace it northward from Windsor, for so the records run, and in that town the path was made a highway within six years of the time Thomas Hooker travelled it. An extant leaf of Windsor's original town votes has the following record, dated February 21, 1641[–2]:

"Its ordered that the way betwixt Henry Styles & James Eggleftons there homelotts downe to the greate riuer, fhall be allow[ed] for a publicke highway for horfe & droue[?] to Agawam & the Bay, and from thence [southward] to the bridge & foe by the head of Plimouth meade downe to Harteford." [2]

This road turned eastward from the present highway, about sixty rods north of the Ellsworth homestead. It was evidently laid out where the original path had been, leading down to John Bissell's "old ferry." On Woodward's and Saffery's map is the note: "Crossing Conecticott river at Windsor fery place, the house of John Bissell being on the west side and the Widow Gibbs hir house on the east side of the river." In 1662, Mathew Grant, after an examination of the town records, gave a rather minute description of this "country road" in the book of *Town Ways* of Windsor. The ferry landed on the east side between the land of Abraham Randall and Catharine Gibbs. The further

[1] Burt's *History of Springfield*, I: 141.

[2] *Windsor Town Votes*, Ms. in collections of the Connecticut Historical Society. The same lay-out is found in Windsor's old book of *Town Ways*, pp. 14, 20.

course of the road northward, nearly half a mile, to Namerick Brook is then given as follows:

"And then goeth up by the River to the uper side of that which was Elias Parkmans Land, and there turns a way from the River, turning toward the upland and runs up as has been marked and set out to where the way was ordered to go down the bank and pafs over the brook, and so to pass a way through the uplands and over other brooks, and on till it is paft the bounds of Windfor, and this was to be maintained for a Country way." [1]

Having this description of the old road, one can hardly miss it where it goes down the bank to cross the south fork of Namerick Brook. Here it has been preserved from the ravages of time. The road followed the river northward for some distance. Then it turned "toward the upland," in plain view, and traversed an elevated field, Here the owner once ploughed up evidences of an old building. We follow the course to the brow of the wooded ravine. There it goes "down the bank," from west to east, as no way from the meadow would have been made. It is evidently an old cart road. It passes a copious spring, flowing from a shaded nook in the hillside. We may fitly call it the "Pilgrims' Spring," after those who doubtless drank of its waters. Here would have been an ideal camping place. The road crosses the brook at a convenient place for a bridge. Then it climbs again to the upland, which it traverses, and goes down the slope to cross the north fork of the brook. Turning northward, then it passes, on a knoll, the site of John Osborn's early home. Thence it led along the upland hillside toward the northern bound of Windsor, cropping out here and there, two rods wide as in the record, and plainly visible where it goes through a woodland tract adjoining the river. This is without question the ancient country road that was used in 1662, and the records indicate that it was laid out where the older path had been to Agawam and the Bay. The crossing of Nam-

[1] Richard Oldage was the original owner of the lot next north of Parkman's. It passed to his son-in-law, John Osborn, who acquired more land along and north of Namerick Brook. From his grandson, Isaac Osborn, in 1727, John Prior bought the land now owned by Mr. F. A. Hamilton and known as "Namerick Farm," Station 83.

erick Brook could not be avoided. There it was necessary to turn eastward to escape the low land at the brook's mouth, often flooded now as then. The topography in connection with the description, therefore, does not admit of any wide range of possibility as to the location of the Bay Path which the pilgrims trod, where it goes "down the bank" to cross Namerick Brook.

At Windsor, Thomas Hooker's company were among friends. Crossing the river at the ferry as they could, they straggled along the way southward, then a mere path with scarcely a wheel track. The adventures of the wilderness had altered their appearance into that of hardy pioneers, and, after the delay of greetings, or perhaps a woodsman's feast and a bivouac within a new palisado, they pursued their journey, across the rivulet, along "the head of Plimouth meadow," past the trading house, which Captain Holmes had brought thither in his bark, under the threatening guns of the Dutchmen, onward into the North Meadow of Suckiaug, and through it, to find themselves at last, though pilgrims from Newtown, at home in another Newtown, on the banks of the Great River.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION OF THE TOWN

The early organization of the three towns, Hartford, Windsor and Wethersfield, is a matter of importance, both in their own annals and in the study of constitutional government. It is well-known that much has been claimed for the Connecticut town as the unit of the state's political system. That its colonial government, as originally established under a constitution, was the creation of three towns, already organized as "little republics," has been a tradition, which historians have blindly followed and in which they have educated the towns themselves. The author, who is interested solely in discovering the truth in the town and colonial records, has been forced to adopt an entirely different opinion. The subject is obviously one to be studied — on the one hand, in the records of the towns, and, on the other, in those of the Colony. There will be perfect accord between the facts disclosed in each. Leaving the study of the latter to another chapter, our present inquiries take us back to an examination of the manner in which these early communities were established, organized and governed. The conclusions reached would better be here stated for the reader. They are: that these pioneer Connecticut settlements were at first established as plantations; that they were governed by the votes of those who had propriety rights in them, called "inhabitants"; that we have a particular acquaintance with one of them, through the extant records of Agawam; that, in Hartford, there were North-side and South-side plantations; that the early orders of the former were transcribed, in 1639, into the book of town votes; that, in December 1637, their inhabitants chose townsmen to further unity in their own affairs; that Hartford thus anticipated the others in town organization; that such action did not give it participation, as a town, in the adop-

tion of the Constitution; that the three original plantations were authorized by the General Court, October 10, 1639, to form their town governments, which authority conferred upon them legal standing as such in the Colony; and that there is no evidence in the records of Windsor or Wethersfield that either of them were any other than plantations, until such legal organization was effected.

At the outset, let us give due weight to the fact that the conditions under which these plantations were established were not such as to hasten town organization. They had removed, as elsewhere shown, under an agreement that effectually disposed of the question of government for one year. They were left thereafter to mature their own designs at their leisure. Their principal need for some time was an equitable method of making divisions of land. That was the right of the legal inhabitants in each plantation, afterwards formed into bodies of proprietors. It did not demand town organization. If we take account of the conditions and labors of pioneer life, with the extraordinary strain of the Pequot War, it seems quite likely that all their attention was engaged in a struggle for existence.

These settlements were in the beginning, it is claimed, only plantations. They were called "The River Plantations." The word "town" was occasionally applied to them, as in the Commission for a provisional government; but it referred to them as inhabited geographical areas. Such a designation did not necessarily imply the existence of town government. In common usage, the term "plantation" was applied to an original settlement in a new country, where certain individuals, called "inhabitants," had secured land rights. There was an important distinction between such a settlement and an organized town, especially in the matter of government. Its affairs were ordered in a meeting of these legal inhabitants. They met, elected a moderator, passed votes, and appointed committees to carry them out. When a plantation arrived at such a stage of organization that its inhabitants elected certain of their number to conduct its affairs, and secured legal standing in the colonial government, it became a town. This was afterwards the method of procedure in Connecticut

settlements. In the records, both of the towns and the Colony, the term "plantation" is generally used before the date of perfected organization. Although it was sometimes used thereafter, through habit of speech, it came gradually to be displaced by the word "town." In the Constitution, the latter term had a proleptic use, as towns were to be the factors in their colonial government. If, therefore, the land records show grants of land by the plantation, and later similar grants by the town, the explanation lies upon the face of the record — the settlement had passed from one estate into the other. The General Court so far recognized this distinction in 1640, as to suggest the manner in which plantations might be made through the admission of inhabitants, and to provide that when a plantation had come to "be at chardge to mayntayne Officers wthin thēselues then other considerations may be had by the Courte." [1] Thus some of their later settlements passed from the estate of a plantation into that of a town.

The inhabitants of these plantations were termed such in a legal sense. This word then had in all the New England colonies the meaning given to it in English law. An inhabitant was not merely a resident, but a householder, actual or prospective, who had secured a right in the settlement's affairs, either by participation in an original founders' agreement, or by the votes of other inhabitants. To such persons in Newtown, Dorchester and Watertown, the Massachusetts General Court had given permission to remove.[2] As emigrants, they were so named in the Commission for a provisional government.[3] Throughout the period of their plantation estate, these inhabitants were the constituent units of their political life. No one should infer, however, that this right of an inhabitant was something that they jealously reserved to themselves. On the contrary, they were anxious for its extension, provided the new-comers were men of the proper sort. The inhabitant was the germ of colonization, and all the plantations were desirous of building up their communities. They restricted it only so far as their common welfare demanded. There

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 59.
[2] *Mass. Col. Rec.*, I: 119, 146, 148. [3] *Ibid.*, I: 170.

were legal inhabitants, who did not remove to Connecticut, and others, who soon removed thence, elsewhere. Against the retention of this right beyond a reasonable time, the plantations protected themselves by limiting the period for removal or building upon the lots reserved for non-residents. The inhabitants were, therefore, those in whom the people found the expression of their opinions and purposes. There was no term current in early colonial times that had a more democratic meaning. Proprietorship was exclusive in property rights, and freemanship in the exercise of the franchise. The standing of an inhabitant was the attainable privilege of every sober-minded and industrious emigrant from over seas, who entered the river plantations. In the author's opinion, it was partly the attachment of these inhabitants to their simple democratic estate that hindered the earlier development of the colonial government.

We have in print fairly complete records of such a plantation — those of Agawam or Springfield. It is singular that this fact has been so generally overlooked by students of Connecticut government. During the first two years of colonial history, Agawam was one of the river plantations. It was then supposed to be within the limits of Connecticut. The other three plantations and the General Court recognized it as an equal factor in their government. In the Court that is supposed to have been largely engaged in discussing the Fundamental Orders, Agawam was represented by committees, chosen at a meeting of its plantation inhabitants. The presumption certainly is that the other plantations had ordered their affairs in the same manner. If it shall appear, moreover, that what is known of early practices in Hartford, and its associated plantations, was in accord with the same in Springfield, we may fairly conclude that we have, in the latter, an illustration of the proceedings in the three towns whose earliest records are lost.

The plantation records of Springfield begin with May 14, 1636, a month before the arrival of Hooker's company.[1] It was then that William Pynchon's company first met.

[1] Burt's *Hist. of Springfield*, I: 153 ff.

Apparently, their initial act was to make a plantation agreement. It was expressed in thirteen articles, to which two others were added on May 16th. The agreement was then signed by the eight men, who were "al[l] of the first adventurers & subscribers for the plantation." These articles specify the particulars upon which they then agreed, such as procuring a minister, giving to every inhabitant a house-lot and a parcel of pasture and meadow, assessing rates on the lands according to each man's proportion, and rewarding with special grants those who had hitherto prosecuted the plantation. A committee was appointed, May 16th, to grant house-lots as ordered. Their unit of authority for years thereafter was the inhabitant. The franchise clause of their votes is expressed in varied language, such as: "It is ordered wth y^{e} consent of y^{e} Plantation," "by y^{e} consent of the inhabitants," "by y^{e} Plantation at a general meeting," "by y^{e} Joynt consent of y^{e} Inhabitants of y^{e} Plantation," "with the generall consent and vote of the Inhabitants" etc. These expressions meant the same thing — that the inhabitants constituted the body politic of their plantation estate. This body, by vote, granted and distributed lands, passed orders, laid out highways, made rates and fixed wages like a company of property owners. When they bought land from the Indians, they paid for it by a rate assessed upon their land. They had no statedly elected officers. Their authority for the appointment of a constable was apparently derived from the Massachusetts General Court. After they withdrew from participation in Connecticut's government, they seem to have been left entirely to the resources of their plantation meetings, until June 2, 1641. Then, William Pynchon was commissioned magistrate by the Massachusetts General Court, with "full power & authority to governe the inhabitants at Springfield." With the assistance of this Court, they continued until September 26, 1644. Then, "by general vote of y^{e} Towne," they laid aside their simple democratic methods and elected, for one year, five men of their number, who were given "power to order in all prudential affairs of the Towne." These men were first called "the five men." That was precisely the action taken by

the adjoining Connecticut plantation several years earlier, only Windsor chose "seven men." As the inhabitants were sometimes termed "townsmen," those elected in Springfield soon came to be called the "Five Townsmen," and later simply "townsmen," "select townsmen," or "selectmen." [1] It is fully proved by the records, therefore, that one of the original river plantations, constituted of inhabitants, governed themselves according to the simplest principles of democracy, until the way was open for their organization as a town.

We have seen that the emigrants from Newtown removed to Hartford in several companies. The pioneers of 1635 settled north of the Little River, the land south of it not being then open to them. This became the North-side Plantation. The majority of the settlers who came in 1636, settled south of the river and became the South-side Plantation. Our land records prove that each plantation distributed its lands to its own inhabitants. When returns of these were made to the Secretary of the Colony, as ordered by the General Court, it was in two lists. One was of North-side inhabitants, and the other of those on "the South fide of the riverrett." [2] Each settler, with a few exceptions, received his proportions on the side of his residence. These plantations held separate meetings. They kept independent records. The town votes mention the North-side book and, by implication, one was also kept by the other. They were, in fact, two settlements, each conducted like Springfield.

To one who is not familiar with the topographical conditions, this dual estate may seem to have been unnecessary, or to suggest a disagreement among the settlers. It was not so. There is not the slightest indication of any jealousy or dissension in early years between these two companies of inhabitants. It was a plan into which they came quite naturally, and for which there were good reasons. The uncertainty as to their issue with the Dutch may have influenced them. If they failed to make good their title to the South-side lands, they would still have those of the North-side. Probably, also, they contemplated from the

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 8, 23, 175, 187, etc.

[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. xiv–xvi.

first a final union in town government. Their principal reason, doubtless, was the convenience of a near location of their lands. This was favoured by the topographical conditions. The Little River, as a dividing line, offered the same water privileges to both. Along the Great River, northward and southward, were extensive meadows. The land across the river eastward, and the uplands westward, presented equal prospects. The same was true of the tracts at the north and south ends of their main highway. Such being the conditions, a dual system of divisions would give to each inhabitant his proportion of meadow, pasture and woodland nearer the location of his house-lot. A general division might have resulted in each having widely scattered possessions. A farmer living at the north end, might have received his allotment of hay and pasture land a mile or more distant from his barns. This would have hindered development. Many sales or exchanges would have been necessary. Delay and confusion would have ensued.

The extent to which this dual government was carried may be inferred from its persistence after the organization of the town. Each plantation continued to pass orders concerning its own welfare. They held separate meetings, on occasion, at the same time and place as the town meeting. Their acts are sometimes recorded with the town's votes.[1] From the beginning of town organization, these plantations were equally represented among the townsmen and other officers, though at first they were not so designated.[2] Each had its constable, highway surveyor, hayward, fence viewer and herder. On each side, there was a pound. Soon this custom was so recognized that officers were named as representatives of one or the other.[3] After 1650, the townsmen are usually so designated in the records until 1687, and sometimes later, when the East-side obtained a place among them.[4] Nor was this dual representation a mere matter of comity between the plantations. It was carried into the management of the town's business and government. The townsmen exercised a certain special jurisdiction or responsi-

[1] "Hartford Town Votes" (Vol. VI, *Conn. Hist. Soc. Coll.*), I: 34, 61, 74, 111.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 4, 8, 41, 58, 64, 79, etc.
[3] *Ibid.*, I: 95, 97, etc.
[4] *Ibid.*, I: 285.

bility over the affairs of the "Side" they represented. The town fixed the rate of taxation, but each side collected its own proportion, and kept separate accounts.[1] Indeed, it is believed that it was largely this necessity they were under, of doing business with the Colony as one settled community, that led them to an early election of townsmen.

Did the North-side Plantation adopt some form of agreement, like the founders of Agawam? The presumption is that they did, and that the conditions of their distributions were a part of it. Probably we have evidence of such an agreement in the record of town votes. It begins with three numbered paragraphs, followed by the statement: "Vppon these Three Condycons all [the] Land that is given in the Towne is given vppon." The heading is "Hartforde 1635." As the town was not so named until February 21, 1636–7, this was written at a later date. The handwriting is that of William Spencer, who did not remove from Newtown until 1638, and died in 1640. The conditions themselves would not have been so worded in 1635, referring to land as returning "vnto the hands of the Towne agayne," when it was the property of the inhabitants. In the author's opinion, the explanation is, that late in 1639, they had occasion to enforce the condition allowing title to land only after four years' residence.[2] This made it desirable that the original action should be incorporated in the town's records. William Spencer, therefore, made this summary from the North-side book and entered it under the true date, "1635." If this was the fact, the lost book of the pioneers' plantation probably contained their original agreement, of which these conditions were a part.

Let us pursue further a critical examination of Hartford's book of town votes. William Spencer had been the efficient and experienced town clerk in Newtown, Massachusetts. Most of the early entries in this book are in his well-known handwriting.[3] He was one of the committee appointed by

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 70, 92, 101, 112, 113, 116–118, etc.

[2] *Ibid.*, I: 13.

[3] On the following pages of the printed volume, the added bracketed numbers indicate the pages of the original volume which are in the handwriting of William Spencer: pp. 1 [11], 2 [12], 8 [13], 10 [115], 11 [14], 13 [3], 14 [4], 16 [5], 17 [6], 19 [2], 20 [1], 21 [A], 23 [B], 25 [7], 27 [8], 28 [9], 30 [10], 32 [47, 1st half], 36 [50 Agreement

the General Court to review the laws and orders of the Colony, in 1639. This would naturally suggest a similar service for the town. On December 26th, at an adjourned session of their first legal town meeting, Edward Hopkins, Thomas Welles, John Steele and John Talcott were chosen to assist the townsmen and "to Inquier w^{t} ordrs stand in forse w^{ch} are of generall Concernm^{t} w^{ch} are not recorded." [1] This was a further reason why William Spencer should transcribe the above-named conditions. He also added all important orders then in force, found in the North-side Plantation book. Following the conditions, are four orders without caption or date. The internal evidence, however, indicates that they belong to the year 1637.[2] One provides for a guard during public worship. This was a proper precaution after the Pequot War. Another, orders each inhabitant to have a ladder, to reach the roof of his house, doubtless in case of fire. A third, forbids the taking of stones at the falls, near the home of Thomas Lord. These two orders were timely in 1637, when the settlers were extensively engaged in house building. In that year, also, Thomas Scott, owner of an adjoining adventurer lot, might well have been appointed to keep in repair the bridge across Gully Brook, leading to Allyn's mill. Following these orders, he recorded, under January 1, 1638–9, the articles conferring and limiting the powers of townsmen, and several orders of November 16, 1639. These entries fill pages 11 and 12 of the original volume. On the next page, he began, in proper form, the record of their town meeting, December 23, 1639. This is not the extent of our indebtedness to William Spencer. He continued as townsman to keep the records during the following months, when the inhabitants were forming the body of proprietors as hereafter related. His valuable service was then ended by his death.

Our only method of determining the date of the organization of the town of Hartford, is by a study of these town votes. Let us trace their annual elections backward, from

of April 15, 1640]. Cf. photographed page in *Records of the Town and Selectmen of Cambridge*, p. 9, and *Hartford Town Votes*, Vol. I, frontispiece.

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 10.

[2] *Ibid.*, I: 1, 2.

the "Genrall Meeting of the whole Towne the 23th December 1639." At that time William Westwood and William Spencer, inhabitants of the North-side, and Nathaniel Ward and John Moody, inhabitants of the South-side, were elected townsmen. It was also voted: "That the sd Townsmen should haue the same power that those had the year before." There were, then, townsmen the previous year, probably, with powers recently defined. The above town officers served until January 21 [11?] 1640–41.[1] On that date, the next meeting was held, and January became the stated month for several years.

The predecessors of these townsmen, we may assume, were elected in December, 1638, and served one year. Gregory Wolterton of the South-side, was one of them, for, under date August 16, 1639, there is an account of money paid to him as "townsman," and he was reckoned with as "last Townsman," March 6, 1639–40.[2] William Wadsworth of the North-side, was another. He had been "townsman," and rendered his account as such "desr this 10th 1640," within the year customarily allowed.[3] We have no hint of any others. Perhaps there were only these two, but the last two articles, of January 1, 1638–9, giving them "the power of the whole to order the Comon occations of the Towne," seem to indicate that there were others.[4]

We interpret the above action as to the powers of townsmen, as showing that the town had been recently organized. Still there had been two townsmen before those last named. On August 16, 1639, John Talcott, of the North-side, and Samuel Wakeman, of the South-side, discharged their accounts, each for the period "when he was townesman."[5] As their terms had then expired, they must have served during the year ending in December 1638. The natural inference is that they had been in office the full term of one year, and nothing appears to the contrary. If such was the fact, they were elected in December, 1637. To that year, it is believed, the above-named orders, recorded without caption, belonged, and, if so, they are doubtless a fragmentary record of Hartford's first election of townsmen.

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 39–41. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 4, 30. [3] *Ibid.*, I: 7.
[4] *Ibid.*, I: 2, 3. [5] *Ibid.*, I: 4.

It was not until the autumn of 1637, after the Indians had been conquered, that the colonists felt secure of the future. Then they found themselves burdened with a war debt. In November, the General Court voted wages to the soldiers for their service. Each plantation had its share of this burden. Soon afterwards, it was apportioned. A colonial treasurer was chosen, and collectors were named in each settlement. In all its dealings with the Colony, Hartford had been treated as one plantation. Nor could this dual settlement have acted as it did, without some concerted action among its inhabitants. We conjecture, therefore, that, as they had such common interests, and were in fact one people, they chose townsmen in December 1637, to express this unity, adjust their taxes on an equitable basis, and, perhaps, also to further such town organization as they had already determined. Unlike any of the other original settlements, Hartford could have such organization without abandoning the plantation estate, which was most advantageous for their unfinished distributions of land. That there was early indifference among some to this action, may be indicated by the town's vote, January 7, 1639–40, requiring every inhabitant to attend the "general meeting," and remain through its session under penalty of six pence. The only responsibility these early townsmen actually assumed, as disclosed in the records, was a financial one for their respective plantations. Such officers were very different in authority from those afterwards elected by vote of the General Court to order the affairs of the town.

We come thus to consider what may be characterized as the most sensational disclosure of these town votes. The inhabitants of Hartford, having chosen townsmen for their own purposes without authority from the General Court, took further action, which can be best stated by placing the original entries of their town votes and the colonial records relating to it in chronological order.

"September 1639:

"It is ordered that Jo steele shall be Regester of euery mans lands in this towne."

Hartford Town Votes, I. 5, 7.

"Octob^{r} the 10th, 1639:

"The Townes aforesayd shall each of them p^{r}vide a Ledger Booke, with an Index or alphabett vnto the same: Also shall choose one who shall be a Towne Clerke or Register, who shall before the Generall Court in Aprill next, record every man's house and land already graunted and measured out to him, with the bounds & quantity of the same. . . ."

Connecticut Colonial Records, I: 37.

"The 16th off Novembr 1639:

"Itis ordrd that John Steele shalbe Register or Towne Clarke to record all [lands] in the Register booke according to [the order of the] genrall Court [ ] is [ ] . . ."

Hartford Town Votes, I: 4.

"Aprell XI. 1640:

"Mr. Steele is returned Recorder for the Towne of Hartford, and hath brought into the Courte 114 coppyes of the severall p^{r}cells of land belonging to & conserneing 114 p^{r}sons."

Connecticut Colonial Records, I: 48.

These entries in the records, taken in connection with other facts, seem to the author to speak for themselves. The election of a town clerk was, perhaps, the proper step in the progress of Hartford's affairs, but, in September 1639, their premature town organization had no legal standing with the General Court of the Colony. In adopting the Constitution, the inhabitants had made over to the Commonwealth all their rights. The General Court must first authorize them "to choose their owne officers" and provide for the election of such a clerk, which it did October 10, 1639. Then, and then only, did the town have legal standing and could proceed to such an election. Therefore, on November 16, 1639, John Steele was reëlected town clerk, according to the order of the General Court. On April 11, 1640, that election was returned to that body with those of Windsor and Wethersfield. The town of Hartford, like a forward pupil, hastened to make its bow to the good dame, who is supposed to preside over Connecticut's councils.

It was "too previous," and was sent back to reënter her royal presence as one of the three original towns.

The order of the General Court, October 10th, as to town organization, was merely an authorization of such action. It conferred the necessary power. No particulars of local government were prescribed. The only officer each town was ordered to choose was a town clerk. It was assumed that they would appoint men "to order the affayres of the Towne," and some of their duties as to the estates of decedents were specified, but the details of such an election were left to local judgment, in view of the conditions. The General Court did, indeed, give power to each town to choose three, five or seven of its chief inhabitants and constitute them a town court for the trial of minor offences. This, however, was optional. There is no evidence that Hartford ever had such a court. This was clearly a plan to provide communities that were inconveniently remote, with the authority of a court. Hartford had no such necessity. There were no reasons why a plantation could not proceed under this act to choose three, five or seven men to order the affairs of the town and, at the same time, constitute them a town court. It is evident, therefore, that Hartford was in a position, when the General Court acted, to proceed at once with town organization. The claim is made that it is the oldest organized town in Connecticut.

When did the other river plantations of Connecticut organize as towns? There are few original records to assist us in answering this important question, but there are more than has been generally supposed. Having now some acquaintance with plantation government, we can better understand familiar records. All the settlements were plantations, but the conditions in Windsor and Wethersfield were altogether different from those in Hartford. No dual plantation life urged town government upon either of them. They had been settled by different companies of inhabitants. As owners of the land, each had full liberty to conduct its local affairs according to the prevailing opinions of the voters.

In early records, we do not find any other terms used concerning Windsor than such as were applicable to a planta-

tion. On May 15, 1637, the agreement as to the purchase of the Plymouth Company's lands names as the grantees the "inhabitants of Windsor." [1] They were the owners, and the subsequent division was made among them. The committee appointed to settle the differences between Mathew Allyn and Windsor, concerning the reserved portion of these lands, in its report dated January 4, 1638–9, ten days only before the adoption of the Constitution, declared that Mr. Allyn should be subject to the orders of the "Plantation of Wyndsor." That report was signed by John Haynes, Roger Ludlow, Edward Hopkins and William Phelps.[2] Windsor's principal divisions of land had not long been completed when the General Court ordered the election of a Town Clerk or Register. The choice of Bray Rosseter was returned to the Court April 11, 1640. He began apparently to record those lands in the town's book October 10th, perhaps making use of earlier plantation records. On January 27, 1640–41, his first return was made to the Secretary of the Colony. The formula used in both instances was that a grant was made "frō the Plantation." [3] Some later grants are recorded in the town's book as "from the towne."

There is not the slightest documentary evidence that Windsor had chosen townsmen, or effected any town organization before the authorization of the General Court. It had no good reason for such action. In the General Court, it was represented by committees of the inhabitants, like the other plantations. There are grounds to suspect that this was altogether satisfactory to Windsor people. Their sentiments were strongly democratic, probably because of the influence of Roger Ludlow and other leaders among them. They could not interrupt their plantation divisions of land by town organization, without the prior formation of a body of proprietors. This they were in no haste to do, or Roger Ludlow would have been expeditious in ripening certain court orders upon which such action depended. He was a member of the committee appointed for this

[1] *Windsor Land Records*, I: 227; Stiles's *Hist. of Windsor*, I: 34, 35, 41.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 53, 54.
[3] See *Windsor Land Records*, Vol. i., and *Col. Land Records*, Vol. I, 1640–1653.

service, and naturally depended on by the others to perform it.

That Windsor's town organization was based upon the General Court's action in 1639, is proved by its own records. A single leaf of its original town votes is extant in the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society. On its two pages, twelve votes are recorded in the handwriting of Bray Rosseter, elected town clerk between October 10, 1639 and April 11, 1640. The votes are numbered from 28 to 39. The date of the first is unknown, as it belonged to an earlier meeting. Ten votes were passed at four meetings, held October 4, 1641, November 5, 1641, February 21, 1641–2 and April 4, 1642. There is a single vote of another meeting, held June 3, 1642. It is evident that twenty-eight votes were recorded before October 4, 1641. Assuming that this book was begun when the plantation changed to town estate, more votes were probably passed at its first meeting than the later average. By any reasonable estimate, it does not seem that the first meeting could have been held before the winter of 1639–40. The dates indicate that the inhabitants intended to have bi-monthly meetings as provided in the Court's action. The last vote, dated June 3, 1642, is as follows:

"Mr Hill, Mr Gaylard, Tho: Fford, Bray Rofseter, Tho: Thorneton, Henry Woolcott & John Moore ar chofen to agitate the affayres of the towne [?] to the order and power giuen by the Court, for the yeare enfuing. Mr Hill is chofen Moderator."

It is evident that Windsor, in organizing its town government, proceeded under the Court's act empowering it "by a generall consent" to constitute a town court, choosing the same body to order the affairs of the town. It thus had "seven men," a moderator and bi-monthly meetings. Since these are so named in the earlier votes, there had been at least one earlier election. The obsolete word "agitate" meant that these men were to "act as agents for" the town. In the preceding votes they had considered such matters as were usually performed by townsmen. The sequel is found in Windsor's town votes, ten years later. They were then choosing seven men named "townsmen"

"to order the afayers of the town," but this body was at the same time holding court for the trial of minor cases. Indeed, three of the seven men were the same persons, and, in place of Bray Rosseter, was Mathew Grant their town clerk.[1] Such a form of local government was well suited to the conditions, Windsor being an inconvenient distance from the courts held at Hartford. The same General Court that gave authority for it appointed a committee to urge the planters at Pequannock, whither Roger Ludlow had gone, to adopt a similar government.[2] We may infer that he was the father of this expedient.

We have fewer records to assist us in fathoming the mystery of early organization in Wethersfield. An interpretation of those we have, justifies an opinion. Three of the four river settlements were first established as plantations. There is no reason to believe that Wethersfield was an exception. The same terms were applied to its early estate throughout the records. Their town clerk, Mathew Mitchell, dated his first return of lands to the Colony February 24, 1640–41. It was of lands "belonging to y^{e} Inhabitants" of Wethersfield. About the same time, he began his entries in the town's land records. This action had certainly been preceded by a period of turmoil in Wethersfield, extending back for more than a year. It had concerned the respective rights of certain parties in the land. In the autumn of 1639, Mathew Mitchell came under the Court's displeasure, for words spoken to or concerning Clement Chaplin, the ruling elder of the church.[3] A difference also arose "about the measure of some ground" between some of the inhabitants and Rev. Henry Smith, their pastor, whose fault is later said to have been his "acting in the ciuell occations of the Towne."[4] Two Hartford magistrates were sent thither to adjust the matter. During this period, Mathew Mitchell had been chosen town clerk. He was returned as such April 11, 1640, on the same day as Bray Rosseter of Windsor and John Steele of Hartford. Being under the Court's censure, he was "found vncapable of the place." Nor

[1] Windsor's *Book of Town Acts*, I: 4–11.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 36; II: 108; Orcutt's *Hist. of Stratford*, I: 79–81.
[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 40, 48, 51, 52, 55.
[4] *Ibid.*, I: 44, 45, 86, 87, 90, 97, 98.

was he accepted until July 2nd, after he had made his acknowledgment to Mr. Chaplin. On that day, John Evans was fined "for his contempte ag^{t} the Townsmen." [1] A month earlier, Richard Gildersleve had been before the Court "for casteing out p^{r}nitious speeches, tending to the detriment & dishonor" of the Commonwealth.[2] It is evident that there had been intense feeling. One party seems to have represented the Church, and another the Town. We are not surprised, therefore, at the disclosures of a record dated April 10, 1640.[3] Then the Court had before it, for interpretation, a certain agreement, between "The Thirty-four Men," the Town and the Church in Wethersfield. There are indications that it had been recently made. The Thirty-four Men were the proprietors. The Church was probably a party to it, because of certain tracts that had been given to be used as glebe land for its maintenance. The Town was concerned for its future interests. Subsequently, grants were made both by the Church and the Town. The proprietors also conducted their own divisions of new tracts.

There seems to the author to be only one explanation of these conditions. The inhabitants of Wethersfield's plantation, soon after the General Court authorized town organization, formed their body of proprietors, as Hartford did, to determine who were the rightful owners of the undivided lands. These Thirty-four Men then made an agreement with the Church, for the adjustment of certain prior rights, and with the Town, that more recent inhabitants might have a share in the lands. In effecting this agreement, dissensions arose that were not easily settled. Indeed, some of the town's best families removed elsewhere. The town's earliest choice seems to have been of five men to order its affairs. It subsequently varied the number. These early townsmen may have exercised their right to sit as a town court; but Wethersfield was nearer Hartford and appears to have been in sympathy with its ideas of court procedure. We know enough of the early discord in its church to justify the inference that it made more difficult the transition from plantation to town estate.

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 55. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 51. [3] *Ibid.*, I: 63.

CHAPTER V

CONNECTICUT'S EARLY GOVERNMENT

The avenue through which one should approach the adoption of the Constitution of 1639, under which Connecticut government was established, is that which was followed by the founders of the Colony. It is marked by merestones all the way. Of their own free will, they travelled it, seeking to realize an ideal, the fundamental principle of which they had definitely conceived, but which they had not wrought into form in some of its features. Historians have usually assumed that the democracy of this government was without any logical antecedents, and due solely to the inspiration of Thomas Hooker's sermon on constitutional government, preached on May 31, 1638. This belief suggests the query whether that eminent divine had only then arrived at such opinions. It is here claimed that he and some of his associates had adopted the fundamental principle of democracy before their emigration, that the Colonial Records reveal its practice in Connecticut from the beginning, and that his famous sermon commemorates the expected realization of their hopes in the adoption of a written constitution. Connecticut government was a natural development among a free people. It inherited no little vigor from the Mother Colony. Massachusetts people had themselves deprecated some of those features in which it was a new departure. The emigration movement to Connecticut was due, far more than has been recognized, to the legitimate causes of colonization. An inviting gateway was opened westward, and the current of emigration flowed through it. This being the case, however, a new opportunity was offered to establish a government in which the dissent of some could find relief without division. Independent opinions here found a field. Such as shared them naturally removed thither. Thus the democratic principles

that were strong in the leaders were furnished with a congenial environment. The truth, which we can hardly say they went into the wilderness to establish, increased in popularity. At last they gave their ideal being.

The manner in which the agreement between the emigrants to Connecticut and the agents of the Warwick patentees came about has been already discussed. To state the fact boldly — as a consideration for the former's settlement under the patent, the latter made over to them the government. This agreement was embodied in the so-called "Commission for a Provisional Government" — a document often neglected by historians, but very important in tracing the course of Connecticut government. It is as follows:

"A Comission graunted to seũall P^rsons to governe the People att Coñecticott for the Space of a Yeare nowe nexte comeing, an Exemplificacõn whereof ensueth:

"Whereas, vpon some reason & grounds, there are to remove from this o^r comonwealth & body of the Mattachusetts in America dyv[^rs] of o^r loveing ffriends, neighb^rs ffreemen & members of Newe Towne, Dorchest^r, Waterton, & other places, whoe are resolved to transplant themselues & their estates vnto the Ryver of Coñecticott, there to reside & inhabite, & to that end dyv^rs are there already, & dyv^rs others shortly to goe, wee, in this present Court assembled, on the behalfe of o^r said memb^rs, & John Winthrop, Jun^r, Esq, Goũn^r, appoyncted by certaine noble personages & men of quallitie interesed in the said ryv^r, w^ch are yet in England, on their behalfe, have had a serious consideracõn there[on], & thinke it meete that where there are a people to sitt down & cohabite, there will followe, vpon occacõn, some cause of difference, as also dyvers mis-deameanr^s, w^ch will require a speedy redresse; & in regard of the distance of place, this state and goũmt cannot take notice of the same as to apply timely remedy, or to dispence equall iustice to them & their affaires, as may be desired; & in regard the said noble psonages and men of quallitie have something ingaged themselues & their estates in the planting of the said ryver, & by vertue of a pattent, doe require jurisdiccõn of the said place & people, & neither the

mindes of the said psonages (they being writ vnto) are as yet knowen, nor any manner of goũmt is yet agreed on, & there being a necessitie, as aforesaid, that some present goũmt may be obserued, wee therefore thinke mee[te], & soe order, that Roger Ludlowe, Esq, Wiłłm Pinchon, Esq, John Steele, Wiłłm Swaine, Henry Smyth, Wiłłm Phe[lpes], Wiłłm Westwood, & Andrewe Ward, or the greater pte of them, shall have full power & aucthoritie to hear & determine in a iudiciall way, by witnesses vpon oathe examine, w^{t}[^{h}in] the said plantacõn, all those differences w^{ch} may arise betweene p̃tie & p̃tie, as also, vpon misdemean^{r}, to inflicte corporall punishm^{t} or imprisonm^{t}, to ffine & levy the same if occacõn soe require, to make & decree such orders, for the present, that may be for the peaceable & quiett ordering the affaires of the said plantacõn, both in tradeing, planting, building, lotts, millitarie dissipline, defensiue warr, (if neede soe require,) as shall best conduce to the publique good of the same, & that the said Roger Ludlowe, Wiłłm Pinchon, John Steele, Wiłłm Swaine, Henry Smyth, Wiłłm Phelpes, Wiłłm Westwood, Andrewe Warner, or the great^{r} p̃te of them, shall haue power, vnder the great^{r} p̃te of their ha[nds], att a day or dayes by them appoyncted, vpon convenient not[ice], to convent the said inhabitants of the said townes to any convenient place that they shall thinke meete, in a legall & open manner, by way of Court, to pceede in execute[ing] the power & aucthoritie aforesaide, & in case of psent necessitie, two of them ioyneing togeather, to inflict corpall punishm^{t} vpon any offender if they see good & warrantable ground soe to doe; provided, alwayes, that this comission shall not extende any longer time then one whole yeare from the date thereof, & in the meane time it shalbe lawful for this Court to recall the said p̃sents if they see cause, and if soe be there may be a mutuall and setled goũmt condiscended vnto by & with the good likeing & consent of the saide noble psonages, or their agent, the inhabitants, & this comonwealthe; provided, also, that this may not be any preiudice to the interst of those noble psonages in the s^{d} ryver & confines thereof within their seũall lymitts."

This document was recorded at the conclusion of the

proceedings of the Massachusetts General Court that met at Newtown, March 3, 1635–6.[1] John Haynes was then the Governor. William Pynchon was an Assistant. Mathew Allyn, William Spencer and John Talcott were present as deputies from Newtown. This document is, obviously, not fully described as a "Commission of Massachusetts." It was such only in so far as the legal authority of its General Court was used to constitute a Court of Magistrates for the river plantations. In doing so, it acted in behalf of the emigrants. The grantor, if such he may be termed, was John Winthrop, Jun., "Governor," the regent appointed by the Warwick patentees. By his own commission, he held the right of jurisdiction in Connecticut. He thus made over the government to the men named, for the period of one year, subject to the approval of his superiors, who had been consulted by correspondence. No government was imposed upon the emigrants by Massachusetts; nor did it claim any such jurisdiction for itself. "The Comission of Go^{r}m^{t} Mencioned tacken from the Masachusets was taken Salua Jury of the enterest of the Gentlemen whoe had the patent of conectacut, that Comission takeinge rise from the desier of the people whoe Remoued whoe judged it in Conveniencie to goe away, w^{t}hout any frame of Gou^{r}m^{t}; not from any Clayme of the Masachusets Jurĩdictiõ o^{r} them by vertew of patent." [2] Of this Commission, Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull has truly said: "It was, in fact, an agreement, ratified in the presence of the Massachusetts General Court, between the founders of Connecticut and the representatives of the Earl of Warwick's grantees." [3] The government provided in this Commission was the creation of the parties who were to assume it. It took its rise from their desires. They would naturally nominate the eight magistrates. There were two from each plantation. Pynchon and Smyth were of Springfield; Ludlow and Phelps of Windsor; Steele and Westwood of Hartford, and Swaine and Ward of Wethersfield. The unit of representation, however, was not the plantation, but the inhabitant. No

[1] *Mass. Col. Rec.*, I: 170, 171.
[2] *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 131; *Mass. Col. Rec.*, I: 320, 321.
[3] *Historical Notes on the Constitution of Connecticut*, 1901 edn. p. 7.

other assembly is suggested, although it is in ambiguous language, than one composed of the "inhabitants" of the plantations. The magistrates had authority to "convent" these upon convenient notice at any time or place. Other than a few essentials, the Commission does not forecast any manner of procedure. It carefully avoids establishing precedents that might embarrass them, or raising points unsettled as yet among themselves. It is a remarkable fact that no feature of it required modification at the expiration of the year. As they passed out of it, they left only a trail so faint that it is difficult to follow them. Considering the circumstances, one can hardly doubt that this provisional government was their own product. In this view, it is the clue to an understanding of their procedure to the adoption of the Constitution.

The one year period of this Commission began on or about March 3, 1635–6. Their first court was held in Newtown, April 26, 1636. Seven sessions were convened during the year. The last was February 21, 1636–7. In their proceedings, there was no departure from the strict interpretation of the Commission. The Court's authority was exercised in all criminal and probate matters, in empowering each plantation to appoint its own military officer and in administering the oath to such constables as the inhabitants had chosen.[1] During this year, Ludlow Phelps, Steele and Westwood were present at every court. Ward was absent from the last. Swaine did not attend the first two, for he had not then arrived. He was made a freeman of Massachusetts, March 3, 1635–6, and was a deputy from Watertown May 25, 1636. Pynchon was present November 1, 1636, and Smyth, his son-in-law, did not attend at all.

At the expiration of this year, the plantations were at liberty to make any alterations they desired in their government. If it was not their own choice, one would expect radical changes. Nothing of the kind occurred. A new situation certainly arose. The terms of the magistrates had expired. They could neither hold over, nor appoint their successors. Indeed, there was only one thing they

[1] *Mass. Col. Rec.*, I: 159, 160.

could do, which they doubtless did before the end of the year, thus giving "convenient notice" — exercise their right under the Commission "to convent the said inhabitants" at a convenient place by way of court. At all events, they did meet March 28, 1637. It is claimed that they made this a Court of Election and that the inhabitants then chose their magistrates. The evidence of this statement is the hitherto unnoticed fact, that among the magistrates then recorded, the name of Thomas Welles is substituted for that of William Westwood. This change must have been made by election. It was evidently in order that the South-side Plantation of Hartford might be represented. Both Steele and Westwood were North-side men. Thus at their first meeting, they put into practice the principle as to the choice of magistrates by the people, afterwards embodied in their Constitution. So, also, it is believed, they began to exercise the franchise, without any restriction other than the estate which a legal and resident inhabitant imposed.

The creation of this Court was an important step in their government's development. Yet one serious objection must have appeared, in such a general assembly of the inhabitants for election. A disproportionate power was given to the plantation where the court was held. Quite naturally, as it convened at Hartford, there would be more inhabitants present from that plantation. As authorized in the Commission, the magistrates had appointed the place of each meeting during the previous year. The first was held at Hartford, the second at Windsor, and the third at Wethersfield. The inconvenience of this rotation did not suit them. Thereafter the Court met at Hartford, the central town. So long as its functions were merely judicial, this did not matter. In an election of magistrates, this practice was unfair to Windsor and Wethersfield, to say nothing of its practical exclusion of Springfield. Those were times of danger from the Indians. The inhabitants could not all leave their homes without protectors, and make a trip to Hartford to vote. The idea is absurd. On the other hand, they recognized all the plantations as on an equality, not necessarily as permanent factors in govern-

ment, but as the charter members of their infant colony. Thus the problem they were really trying to work out was, how they could reconcile in practice, the idea of the people as the source of authority in electing their rulers, with the conditions that made a fair representation of the inhabitants in the plantations impossible. Their final solution is given in the Constitution, but that contemplated organized towns, each represented by deputies, and a body of freemen. As yet no town governments had been formed; so they decided, at this first court, after the expiration of the Commission, that each company of inhabitants should be represented in their next court, by committees, three in number, chosen by the inhabitants themselves, and that these should, as such, elect the magistrates, sharing with them the responsibilities of government. Thus, wherever the Court was held, the inhabitants had a just, and in that day, proportionate representation. At the same time, the people were the source of authority in their elections.

The term "committee" was the proper designation for such a representative. That word was then used in a sense now obsolete. It signified that each man was an inhabitant, to whom a charge, trust or function had been committed. An inhabitant so chosen represented the opinions of other inhabitants. The term was presumably used with design. Historians have generally considered that this word was synonymous with "deputy." It certainly was not. The deputy's office was one some of the settlers had filled in Massachusetts. As there used and defined in the records, the term "deputy" was applied to a representative in the General Court, chosen by the freemen of an organized town.[1] If the representatives in these early Connecticut courts had been deputies, they would have been designated by that familiar title in the records. They are so named as soon as organized towns assumed their true function under the Constitution.

The Colonial Records themselves should now be followed with critical care, though it may be tedious. The founders of Connecticut, having solved their problem for the time, constituted the next General Court accordingly. It was

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 118.

convened May 1, 1637, and is famous as the court that declared war against the Pequot Indians. The inhabitants of each plantation were represented by committees, three in number, and the same magistrates were elected. It is not presumed, of course, that no other inhabitants were present. Perhaps most of the leading settlers were there. The committees, however, were the voting members for the inhabitants. As no roll is given in connection with the courts of June 2nd and June 26, 1637, it is thought that they were adjourned sessions, according to subsequent practice.[1] Their next court assembled November 14, 1637. The roll calls attention to the fact that a new election had been held. The companies of inhabitants are represented by two committees from each plantation. One of each delegation was a new man, and John Haynes fills the place of John Steele as a magistrate. There was only one other court held during this legislative year, February 9, 1637–8. The word "pʳsent" after the names suggests that some of the members were not there, and that the roll is fragmentary. At the close of this court, the following vote was passed: "It is ordered yᵗ the generall Courte now in being shalbe dissolved and there is noe more attendance of the members thereof to be expected except they be newly chosen in the next generall Courte." Notwithstanding other possible explanations, this vote is thought to indicate that during the year they had held two elections, carrying on the May court by adjournment to the election for the November court, which, at the present adjourned session, they vote to dissolve, intending to make a new beginning with their third year.

Every court, whose proceedings are recorded, from May 1, 1637 to the adoption of the Constitution was a General Court, though probably the magistrates held some Particular courts.[2] Most of these courts are designated as such in the caption. Others are proved to have been such by the language and proceedings.[3] They evidently used the title current in Massachusetts. There a general court was one composed of magistrates and deputies, convened for certain

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 27, 28, 30–34, 40–42.
[2] *Ibid.*, I: 16. [3] *Ibid.*, I: 12, 16.

purposes, such as election, the making of laws or the levying of taxes.[1]

The first court of the third year was held March 8, 1637–8. In this, the inhabitants of each plantation were represented by four committees. For the first time since the expiration of the Commission, William Pynchon and Henry Smyth of Springfield appear among the magistrates. Perhaps this was rather by courtesy than right, as no committees were present. This court seems to have adjourned to March 22nd and then dissolved. It is evident that the inhabitants are now looking for a "settled order" of colonial government. Their attention had hitherto been engaged in fighting the Indians, military affairs, measures to secure provisions and the payment of a war debt. In each plantation they were under the necessity of making their divisions of land, erecting their buildings and breaking up their fields. We now notice an unusual procedure. The members of their next court, April 5, 1638, which is known to have been a Court of Election, are the same as those of the last, with the addition of committees from Springfield. The roll is as follows:

Magistrates — William Pynchon, Henry Smyth, of Springfield; Roger Ludlow, William Phelps, of Windsor; John Haynes, Thomas Welles, of Hartford; Mathew Mitchell, John Plumb, of Wethersfield.

Committees — Jehu Burr, George Moxon, of Springfield; Thomas Ford, George Hull, Thomas Marshall, John Mason, of Windsor; Edward Hopkins, John Steele, John Talcott, John Webster, of Hartford; John Gibbs, George Hubbard, Thurston Raynor, Andrew Ward, of Wethersfield.

There was doubtless some special reason why it seemed wise to the inhabitants of Windsor, Hartford and Wethersfield to reëlect the same committees, and why these should reëlect the same magistrates. That they had begun the discussion of their Constitution seems most likely to have been that reason. Only two committees had been chosen from Springfield. We know that they were elected at a meeting of the plantation's inhabitants. The record is: "There was a free choyce according to an order from m^r^

[1] *Mass. Col. Rec.*, I: 117.

Ludloe by the plantation of two Goodmen, Committys for the General court to be at Hartford the 4th of April, 1638. The partys chosen are Mr. George Moxon and Jehue Burr." [1] Other particulars concerning this court are found in Thomas Hooker's letter to Governor John Winthrop, written during the following autumn. "At the time of our election," he says, "the committees from the town of Agaam came in with other towns, and chose their magistrates, installed them into their government, took oath of them for the execution of justice according to God, and engaged themselves to submit to their government." [2] There cannot be any doubt, therefore, as to the manner in which this General Court was constituted. Springfield was then a plantation and not an organized town. Its legal inhabitants were the voters. They expressed the wishes of the people in the choice made by the committees. Nor is there the slightest evidence that the conditions were different in the other plantations. The inhabitants of Hartford's North-side Plantation were represented by Steele and Talcott, committees; those of the South-side Plantation by Hopkins and Webster. When the committees had elected magistrates, they "installed them into their government." John Haynes was of the North-side, and Thomas Welles of the South-side. Probably it was because of a desire to give each plantation the same voice in the decisions of this important court, that the committees were four in number. So far as the founders of the Colony could devise means, therefore, this General Court was constituted by the inhabitants.

It has been suggested, with good reason, that this court of April 5th adjourned to May 31, 1638, when Thomas Hooker delivered before its members, many others being in attendance, his famous sermon on constitutional government.[3] The discourse itself has been frequently discussed. We are now prepared to understand its historical relation to preceding events. Thomas Hooker did not then proclaim as a new truth that "the foundation of authority is laid in the free consent of the people." It is an injustice

[1] Burt's *Hist. of Springfield*, I: 153.
[2] *Conn. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, I: 13, 14, 18.
[3] *Ibid.*, I: 19–21.

to him to make such a claim. He had presumably held such an opinion two years before, when he set out from Newtown. As the inhabitants had practiced that truth more than a year in their government, we may fairly assume that he had already taught it on more than one occasion, now unknown. Nor was it a new truth, to his congregation, that "the choice of public magistrates belongs unto the people by God's own allowance." That was precisely the principle the inhabitants of the plantations had practiced from the first. These are merely premises, already established in their experience. He is now engaged in enforcing the timely deduction, that "they who have power to appoint officers and magistrates, it is in their power, also, to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place unto which they call them." In other words, he is urging upon the inhabitants a further step in their progress — the enactment of laws according to which magistrates shall render judgment. That was the issue. He is making the plea of the ages for a constitutional government. It was the logical outcome of the steps they had already taken. In that, was the difference between the theories of many, as well as the practice in the Mother Colony and the democratic government that he and his associates were endeavoring to establish on the banks of the Connecticut River. Governor Winthrop, writing of his own Colony, says: "The people had long desired a body of laws, and thought their condition unsafe, while so much power rested in the discretion of magistrates;" but "the magistrates and some of the elders" were not "very forward in this matter." [1] That was one of the points discussed between Winthrop and Hooker in their correspondence that season.[2] Thomas Hooker would not have encouraged any other development of Connecticut's early government, than one that tended toward the final adoption of a constitutional government by the people, which was doubtless his cherished ideal.

After the date when Thomas Hooker preached his sermon, we have no records of any general courts, until January 14, 1638–9, when the Constitution was adopted. During the

[1] Winthrop's *History*, I: 388, 389.

[2] *Conn. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, I: 1–18; Trumbull's *Historical Notes*, etc., pp. 8–10.

summer the confederation of the colonies was under consideration. Their negotiations were interrupted by Massachusetts' claim of jurisdiction over Springfield. These affairs may have delayed action. The establishment of a constitutional government, however, involved matters that could not be hastily settled. It seems likely that whatever general courts were held, would have been adjourned sessions of that already elected. Otherwise, we should probably have had some record and a list of its members. If other courts were constituted by election, they were composed, it is thought, of the same committees and magistrates that had been already twice elected, contrary to previous custom, apparently because the framing of the Constitution had been committed to them.

How was the Constitution of 1639 adopted? Interest has gathered about this question, because it has been thought that the manner of its adoption determines a fact of large importance in our constitutional history. That, we think, is not true. However the Constitution was adopted, it was the act of resident inhabitants in three Connecticut plantations. It originated with and was adopted by the people. Some have believed that it was adopted in a mass meeting of the "inhabitants and residents." Others have argued that it was adopted by the representatives of three organized towns, convened in a general court. The author claims that we are not restricted to these two opinions. Neither of them is in harmony with the Colonial Records, and yet there is truth in both of them.[1] The advocates of the former view have appealed to the language of the Constitution's preamble: "We the Inhabitants and Residents of Windsor, Harteford and Wethersfield, now cohabiting and dwelling in and vppon the River of Conectecotte." The phrase, "Inhabitants and Residents," was then in common use in New England. It meant simply "resident inhabitants," and excluded such legal inhabitants as were non-residents. The Commission itself had been issued to those who were to "reside and inhabite" or "sitt down & cohabite" in Connecticut. The

[1] *New England States*, I: 448 ff.; *Connecticut Magazine*, V: 86 ff.; *Anniversary of the Adoption of the Constitution*, p. 26.

preamble states the exact truth. The Constitution was adopted by the resident inhabitants. That could be, however, without a mass meeting. Such a gathering was excluded by their own principle of having a fair representation. It would have been less dignified and orderly, to say nothing of the improbability of such a meeting in times of danger from the Indians and in mid-winter. Such a mass meeting, convened in Hartford, would have been composed largely of local inhabitants. Those who advocate the second view have based it upon the assumption that there were then three organized towns, represented as such by committees. From this we dissent. They have, however, correctly interpreted the Colonial Records. These do not contain the least evidence of a general gathering of the inhabitants. In the author's opinion, the Constitution of 1639 was adopted at a meeting of the General Court, and by that body, which was constituted of committees and magistrates, representing, directly and indirectly, the resident inhabitants of three Connecticut plantations. There was a General Court convened at Hartford, January 14, 1638–9. We have, in the records, one of its votes. There is no reason to think that the founders departed on this occasion from their established practice, nor that this Court was constituted in any other way than was customary in carrying out the will of the people. It seems most likely that this General Court was composed of the committees and magistrates already named in the roll of April 5, 1638, with the exception of the representatives of Springfield, who had withdrawn. In that case, the men who participated in its action were all prominent inhabitants. Four of the six from Hartford attained gubernatorial honors. Of the remaining two, one became the Secretary, and the other the Treasurer of the Colony. Other leading inhabitants were doubtless present, the pastors, teachers and elders among them. Their assembly is historically named a "General Court"; but, in modern terms, it was rather a Constitutional Convention. Hartford then had an immature town organization. Still it had no representation, as such, in that body. The Constitution they had framed was the inspiration of the people. It was adopted by the people, and its

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blessings were for the people. We can dimly see through the mists their solemn assembly in the meeting-house of Hartford, in their midst "the first written constitution in the history of nations"; and it is as dramatic a scene as the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The attention of historians has been so largely directed to the study of records preceding this event, that those which follow it have escaped due notice. There we find the solution of some of our enigmas. The vote of adoption did not, in fact, put their government into immediate operation. That was impossible. Their plan had provided for some factors that were not in existence. These had to be created. As in setting up a machine, there were various parts to be assembled. The inhabitants had founded a Commonwealth. In so doing, they had vested the "supreme power" in a General Court. Some of the rights they had held were thus suspended until that Court acted.

The adoption of the Constitution modified their rights of franchise. Under plantation government, the inhabitants had been the voters in all local affairs and had chosen the committees. Such as took the oath of fidelity, still had the right to vote for deputies. To fill that office, however, or to vote for the governor and magistrates, they must now be made freemen. This standing was attained by vote of the General Court and taking the freeman's oath. Hitherto there had been no such class. Under these circumstances, their government could only continue as before, until the body of freemen was constituted. This was their first act. We conjecture that the Court of January 14, 1638–9, adjourned to February 18th for that purpose.[1] Many inhabitants were certainly made freemen at an early date — all who served as magistrates or deputies. The average standing of those admitted later indicates that the principal inhabitants had already qualified. On April 11, 1639, these freemen held their first election of governor and magistrates. Still the plantations, not being as yet organized towns, were then unprepared to act under the Constitution in the choice of deputies. The inhabitants,

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 30. Cf. pp. 41, 42.

therefore, elected, as formerly, "committees," which fact the records prove.

In their new Commonwealth, justice was to be administered according to established laws. As yet, they had no such code. Little opportunity had been given to become acquainted with those laws that had been enacted. On this matter the Court took action October 10, 1639. Wyllys, Webster and Spencer were then appointed to review "all former orders and lawes," record those of "publique concernement," and deliver them to the Secretary to be published to the towns. Within twenty days after the end of the Court, he was to provide a copy of all the penal and general laws "for the government of the Commonwealth," deliver the same to the constables of each town, who were, within four days, to publish them at some public meeting, and then cause them to be written in a book to be kept for the town's use, and read publicly every year.[1] Thus the earliest code of Connecticut laws was prepared in manuscript.

The inhabitants, moreover, had been the lawful owners of the undistributed lands in the several plantations; but, in the Constitution, they had explicitly made over to the Court their right to "dispose of lands vndisposed of." Their act was an effectual conveyance to the Colony, from which they expected to receive later their title. This suspended all distributions of new tracts until the Court acted. Such was, in fact, its effect. We have found no evidence in the records of any new distributions between January 14, 1638–9 and October 10, 1639. On the latter date, the General Court by an order gave to each of the three towns the "power to dispose of their owne lands vndisposed of, and all other comodityes arysing out of their owne lymitts bounded out by the Court." [2] In order that they might proceed in such distributions, however, it was necessary to form the original owners into a body of proprietors in each town, for later residents were not admitted

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 36, 39. Several manuscript copies of the Code of 1650, with the addition of session acts to 1703 are extant. Windsor's copy is among the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society and Guilford's is in the Pequot Library.

[2] *Ibid.*, I: 36.

to an equal participation in the inhabitants' property. It was this situation that gave rise to the formation of "The Thirty-four Men," or proprietors, of Wethersfield. In an adjustment of claims, they made the agreement with the Church and the Town, out of which their land disputes arose. The inhabitants of Hartford began similar action on December 26, 1639. Their procedure is traced in a later chapter on the proprietors.

Above all, the Constitution had provided for organized towns as the local factors in their government. The inhabitants had constituted the Commonwealth; now its General Court must authorize the creation of towns. It was from that supreme power, confirmed to the Colony in the Charter of 1662, that all town rights emanated. As a distinguished Connecticut lawyer, Hon. Henry C. Robinson, once said, "Under the original fundamental orders, under the charter and under the constitution of 1818, the towns have had no power, except as it was given them by the organic law or by the general court." The Constitution provided that the three original towns should each have four deputies, according to the historic principle of equality among them as plantations, there being then about the same population in each. It also provided, however, that "whatsoeuer other Townes shall be hereafter added," "they shall send so many deputyes as the Courte shall judge meete, a reasonable p[r]portion to the nūber of Freemen that are in the said Townes." [1] So that Supreme Power, which the people had created, pledged itself to secure unto its constituent communities a reasonable representation of the people.

That the General Court experienced unexpected delay in securing the passage of these orders is proved by its own records. These inform us that, at their spring election, on account of "the state of the present ty[me] and the many occations that ly vppon men," it being their planting season, the Court appointed a committee "to ripen orders formerly in agitacon against [the] next meeting of the Court." [2] This committee consisted of John Haynes, governor; Roger Ludlow, deputy governor; George Wyllys, Edward Hopkins,

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 24. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 27, 28.

Thomas Welles, magistrates; and John Steele and William Spencer, committees. The orders in question concerned the adjustment of their Colonial government. At the court September 10th, Roger Ludlow being absent, Hopkins Wells, Steele and Spencer, were "intreated to ripen some orders that were left vnfinished the former Court, as about p^{r}vition of settling of lands, testaments of the deceased, and recording spetiall passages of P^{r}vidence." [1] These orders were voted at an adjourned session, October 10th. They constitute action of vital importance in the solution of Connecticut's historical enigmas. The only one that has no known sequel is the last provision. If only Roger Ludlow Esq., Captain John Mason, Rev. Samuel Stone, Elder William Goodwin, Elder Clement Chaplin and Mr. George Hubbard, who were appointed to this service, had left us a symposium on the "spetiall passages of Providence" in his dealing with the River Plantations, they would have won the lasting gratitude of posterity.

Thus at their next Court of Election, April 9, 1640, the committees of the inhabitants give place in the records to the "Deputies" of three organized towns. The Ship of State had crossed the bar, and, with the recognition of a guiding Providence hitherto, it put out to sea.

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 34.

CHAPTER VI

INDIAN FORTS IN HARTFORD

The Indian paths that followed the Connecticut River southward from Agawam, were much frequented. Here and there along them, were the forts, favorite haunts and planting fields of the natives. These River Indians were all of one general tribe, called Sequins, but they were divided into bands, according to their residence and sachemship. In 1633, Natawanute had sold the planting field of the Matianuck or Windsor Indians to the Plymouth traders. At the time of the settlement of Hartford, Sequassen was the sachem of the Suckiaug Indians. From his village, a well-known trail led southward to Pyquaug. There, in early times, was the residence of the chief sachem of the Sequin tribe, Sowheag, who sold land to the planters of Wethersfield and removed to Mattabeset, near Middletown. In their later residence, these natives were termed "Wongunks," from their location at the river's bend, "Wongunk" meaning bend. The Dutch called this sachem "the chief Sequeen." Sequassen of Suckiaug was his son. Other bands of this tribe resided east of the river. One of these was the Hockanum Indians, who lived along the river of that name in East Hartford. Another was the Podunks, residing along the Podunk River, between East Hartford and South Windsor, where they had a famous fort. The Tunxis Indians are sometimes referred to as a sub-clan of those at Suckiaug. Probably this relationship arose from intermarriage and long association in their winter residence. It is proposed to locate as nearly as possible the homes of these aborigines within the bounds of early Hartford, which now the white man inherits.

In his description of the view upon which the founders looked on their arrival at Hartford, Stuart has the following statement: "Here and there, scattered in open spaces on the banks of the Great River, and along the Little River

here and there, beneath tall and majestic trees or on little cleared elevations in different parts of our present city, the smoke rises from numerous wigwams." [1] It is an interesting picture. Acquaintance with Indian customs, however, would lead to the conclusion that their wigwams were gathered in one locality. Their practice was to retire inland during the winter season, to more secluded vales and forests, or to shut themselves within their elevated strongholds. Their residence near the river would have been at some favorite fishing-place. Some of these Indians doubtless remained near the pioneers during the winter of 1635–6. They are thought to have furnished the whites with food. In the springtime we shall find them in a village of Indian wigwams, ready for the fishing. The name of the Suckiaug Indians points to the river meadows. It was derived from the word "sucki-auke," meaning "black earth." Later authorities inform us that the North and South meadows were partly wooded, with forbidding swamps in places. The Little Meadow was, according to a tradition that the land records favor, the Indians' planting-ground. Their name seems most likely, therefore, to point to this tract. It was between the Indian path and the river. In that case, their village would have been near at hand. The homes of the pioneers looked out upon this Indian field. The native village could not have been south of them. There the rivulet made a boundary between them and the Dutch. There was a tract on the north, however, quite similar in its features to those the Indians usually chose for this purpose. It bordered upon the North Meadow Creek on the east. The path from Matianuck led to or near it. The creek emptied into the Connecticut River at the landing-place. It thus afforded a harbor for canoes. At times these could ascend it for some distance. In the springtime it was a good fishing-place and has been to recent times. Porter says of this location: "There is a tradition that it was once an Indian camp ground, and Indian implements of war have been found on the premises." [2] That these natives continued in the neighborhood in 1637, and

[1] Scaeva's *Hartford in the Olden Time*, p. 18.
[2] Porter's *Historical Notices*, No. 2, p. 26.

were friends of the settlers, is certain. Their presence exerted no little influence in the declaration of war against the Pequots. Thomas Hooker himself wrote to Governor Winthrop of their relations in this wise: "Though we feele nether the tyme nor our strenght fitt for such a service, yet the Indians here, our frends, werr so importunate with vs to make warr presently, that vnlesse we had attempted some thing, we had delivered our persons vnto contempt of base feare & cowardise, & caused them to turn enemyes agaynst vs." [1] Danger was encompassing the river settlements like a prairie fire. A general uprising of the Indians was threatened. Savages who had never tested English valor naturally attributed inactivity to cowardice. Even their friends were infected. Suddenly, on April 23rd, came the Wethersfield massacre. It was a challenge they must accept, or soon be overwhelmed. So, on May 1st, the General Court declared an offensive war against the Pequots and, ere long, their little fleet was afloat on the Great River. "Agaynst our mynds" wrote Thomas Hooker, "being constrayned by necessaty, we haue sent out a company, taking some Indians for guides with vs"; and before they set out their reverend leader gave them his blessing.[2] In due time, they attacked the Indians' stronghold at Mystic. The power of the most dangerous tribe in New England was crushed forever.

If the Suckiaug Indians were on such friendly terms with the English before the destruction of their traditional enemies, the success of that war must have augmented their obligations. A reward was suitable. The English wanted their lands and did not want them for near neighbors. All cleared land was very valuable. The Little Meadow appears to have been divided in 1636. Most of its lots were small, as if for garden use. Some of these were bounded eastward on the creek. They extended as far north as the cow-yard. If there was still farther north another open tract, it would have been a temptation to the early settlers. Such land for immediate use was a necessity.

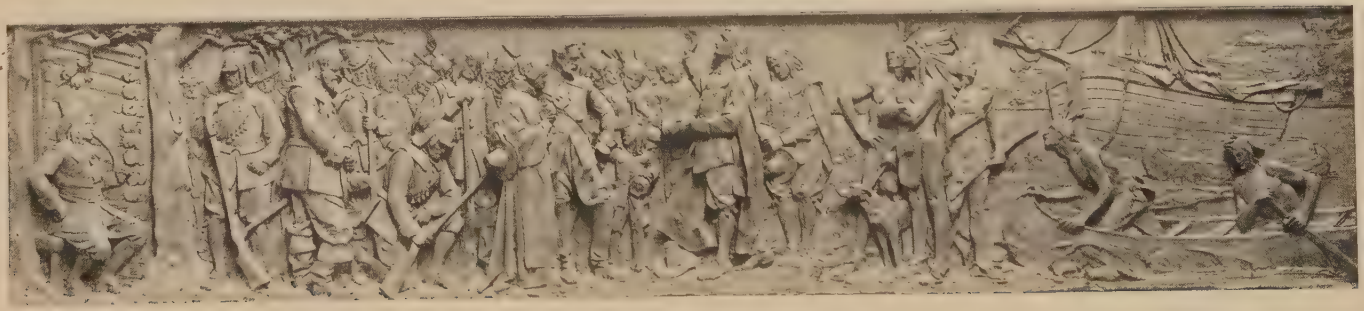
[1] *4 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, VI: 388, 389.

[2] Mason's "Brief History" in Mather's *Early History of New England*, ed. 1864, p. 156.

It seems very probable, therefore, that the Soldiers' Field was the original location of the Indian village, that their wigwams were standing there when the pioneers arrived, and that the natives did help them during the winter. Upon the coming of Hooker's company in 1636, the natives came under the protection of a considerable force. They evidently did what they could to instigate war against the Pequots. When this was forced upon the English, the natives became their allies. Thus, when the little army returned home, victorious beyond their hopes, it was a natural thing for the Indians, in their gratitude over the destruction of their enemies, to surrender to the English the site of their village to be divided among the soldiers, and themselves remove, as we know they did about this time, to the South Meadow. There was never, so far as we know, any Indian fort on this tract. Centinel Hill may at some time have served such a purpose. These Indians, being a clan of the Sequins, would more likely seek protection elsewhere in time of war. In fact, Governor Hopkins said in 1640, that the Indian "owners had fled away to seek assistance from their people." This was doubtless true, but it happened sometime before the occupation of the land by the English, whose title the Governor was then defending.

Our quest now takes us to the South Meadow, whither Sequassen and his band went to make their last stand against civilization. The land the Dutch claimed to have bought, was situated, they said, "in the jurisdiction of the Chief Sequeen," whose tribe had been subdued by the Pequots. From the latter's sachem, as the conqueror, their purchase had been made. This was done, as they said, "with the free will and consent of the Sequeen." [1] The narrative thus continues: "It is further expressly conditioned by this contract and assented to by the aforenamed chief, that the Sequeen should dwell with us, all at the request, and to the great joy of the Sequeen Altarbaenhoot [Natawanute] and all interested tribes. This has taken place, on the part of the Sequeen, with the knowledge of Margaretinne [Miantinomo] chief of Sloop's Bay" [Narragansett Bay]. In

[1] *Holland Documents*, I: 543, II: 139.



The Departure for the Pequot War

a Dutch report of their boundaries, written in 1649, there is a similar statement. "For greater security," it says, "the Sequeen and his tribe on the Conitte Cock, went to dwell close by Fort Hope, which is also expressly conditioned in the purchase of Conitte Cock, as can be proved by Sonquassen the son of the late Sequeen, who is still living." [1] Some have supposed that these assertions are untrue, having been made in support of their claims to the land. Others have thought that they refer to the settlement of Sequassen's Indians in the South Meadow, as no other band has been known to have lived there. It is here claimed that the Dutch statements are not only true, but also that they offer the only explanation of certain facts in our own records. There is nothing improbable in the claim that the Dutch purchased their land of a Pequot sachem. The Pequots were given to such sales. Nor is it unlikely that the Dutch offered protection to some Sequins, who consented to the bargain. It was common for the Dutch to have Indian neighbors in their wilderness life. If these Indians went to dwell under the protection of the House of Hope, that event occurred in 1633, soon after the Dutch made their purchase. The erection of an Indian fort for protection against their enemies, would have been their first undertaking.

That there was in early times an Indian fort in the South Meadow, is established by our records. A Dutch map of the Connecticut River, dated in 1666, has upon it the usual sign for a fort south of the House of Hope.[2] This could have been none other than an Indian fort. Whether it was intended to locate this fort in the South Meadow or at Wethersfield, is perhaps uncertain. Our earliest record is of action at a town meeting, January 29, 1643–4. A committee was then appointed to "inquier of [the] statt of the land y^{t} ded belong to the Indians aptayning to Soaquasen or to him Sellfe & of that y^{t} ded belong to manorolos whether it doth belong to the towne or nott & if it do so then it shall be desposed of by them by Letting of it for the tounes vse." [3] This must mean that there were two

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 543.
[2] Winsor's *Narr. and Crit. Hist. of America*, III: 333.
[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 68, 69.

tracts or parts of the "Indian Land" in the South Meadow, one that had belonged to Sequassen or the remnant of his people, and the other to Manorolos, who it is here claimed was a Sequin chief who had lived near the Dutch. This record is significant at that date. During the previous season, Sequassen had been at war with Uncas, who was himself at enmity with Miantinomo, the Narragansett chief. Various attempts had been made upon Uncas's life by poison and sorcery, and had failed. "That being discouered," the records say, "some of Sequassons company, an Indian Sagomore allyed to, & an intimate confederate wth Myantinomo, shott at Vncas as hee was going downe Conectacutt Riuer wth a arrow or two." [1] According to the treaty of 1638, Uncas appealed to Governor Haynes, who, having been unsuccessful in effecting a reconciliation, because Sequassen preferred war rather than sacrifice the friendship of Miantinomo, left them to fight it out. This they presently did. Uncas soon attacked Sequassen on his reservation, "Killed seven or eight of his men, wounded 13, burnt his wigwams and carried away the booty." [2] This event occurred in the early summer of 1643, and the battlefield was in the South Meadow. Miantinomo then took up the conflict, that resulted so disastrously to him, as hereafter related. It seems probable, therefore, that, after his defeat and the destruction of his village, Sequassen deserted the land he had occupied, and the English began immediately to consider its future improvement. Soon afterwards, he was suspected of a conspiracy against the English and became a fugitive until 1650. He was then permitted to return to Hartford.

No report of the above committee is recorded. The land records indicate that soon thereafter the southwest portion of the Indian Land was allotted among the English. In 1657, there were several owners who had bought of John Crow land, which has been identified as part of this tract. We have no record of the original distribution of it. The explanation may be, that a tract of acreage unnamed, in that "which was called the Indian Land," was given by the town to Elder William Goodwin, in lieu of his land in the

[1] *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 11. [2] Winthrop's *History*, II: 155.

North Meadow and for other service. This may have passed to John Crow, his son-in-law. The land occupied by Sequassen was mostly west of the highway to the "Forty Acres." It was bounded on the west by the "Great Swamp" lots. East of the roadway, there were several parcels extending to the Connecticut River, which then flowed not far away. To these lots the change in the river's course has added much land since. A tradition that was current in the middle of the last century, locates Sequassen's wigwams on what is known as the Richard Brown lot. This may be true. Indian land that has been traced was in that locality. In that neighborhood certainly, the Indian chief who first welcomed the founders of Hartford, was living when he suffered a blow from which he never recovered.

Let us follow the history of Manorolos's land. It was situated on the river, not a great distance from the Dutchmen's land. Indians lived there for many years. The acreage was ever decreasing in extent. In 1657, a new committee of the town was appointed "to enquire after thos that now enjoy y^{e} Indian Land," and to require rent of them.[1] They reported the next year that there were eight and a half acres in the possession of five persons. Among these tenants was Lieutenant Thomas Bull, who had two acres. The renting continued. In 1659, the town granted to Lieutenant Bull his two acres, "as long as he himself continnueth an Inhabitant in Hartford . . . and then the land is to return unto y^{e} Towne."[2] Twenty-five years elapsed before his death. The condition of the grant had probably been forgotten, and the land was considered as his own. In his will, he bequeathed to his son Captain Jonathan Bull his "Two Acar Lott Lying by the Indian ffort by the great River's side." No one had better information on which to base the use of such language than that renowned Indian fighter. In 1663, the townsmen were empowered to "dispose of that land called the indians land in the south meadow vnto the antient natiues who have lived amonge vs according to their best discreetion for this yeare"; but, in 1683, the land, excepting that actually occupied by the Indians, was divided between the First

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 120. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 121, 126–128.

and Second churches, for the maintenance of the ministry.[1] It has been traced in the town's land records to the present time. That of the First Church is the tract of four acres belonging to the "Heirs of John Barnard," as indicated on a map accompanying the "Proceedings at the Dedication of Charter Oak Hall" in 1856. It remained in the possession of the church, excepting for the exchange of one acre in 1769, from the date it was received from the town to 1813. It was then leased for 999 years, to John Barnard, he "paying therefor on the first day of January of each year during said term a yearly rent of one pepper corn if demanded."[2] The land of the Second Church was next south of it, and the two acres of Lieutenant Bull next north. The Second Church retained its tract until 1825. The committee, as then authorized, sold it to Elijah Bibbins.[3] East of this land and the meadow path, there was a tract of thirteen acres, also called "Indian Land." It was known later as "The Sands." This name correctly suggests the making of land on the west bank of the river by the change in its course. In all, there were originally about thirty-six acres in this northern tract, formerly belonging to the Indians.

We should follow more in detail the most northerly portion of this tract on the river's bank. Upon it the old Indian fort once stood. It is part of the ten acres of Henry Barnard on the above named map. It can now be best located as near Colt's Ferry. As late as 1832, it was known in conveyances as the "the Indian Lot." This land actually remained in possession of the native owners until 1723, and they are proved to have been kindred of those who dwelt at Wongunk. In 1713, Sarah Onepenny, Indian woman, in a nuncupative will, bequeathed her land in the South Meadow to her grandson Scipio, a servant of Colonel William Whiting.[4] It was set off as 4 acres, 55 rods, "which said piece of land is and has been reputed to belong to the Indians for a great many years." This woman was a relative of Sarah Hopewell, an Indian of Wethersfield, who, in

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 141, 212.
[2] *Hartford Land Records*, 13: 43, 60; 31: 170.
[3] *Ibid.*, 44: 447, 530, 581; 47: 562; 48: 183, 360, 361; 51: 93, 174.
[4] Manwaring's *Hartford Probate Records*, II: 269.

1704, had bequeathed her estate to Robin Mashoot, Sarah Onepenny and Munnumquask.[1] Another Sarah Onepenny, daughter of the first of that name, bequeathed her estate, in 1727, to her nephew, Scipio Two Shoes, doubtless the servant above mentioned. She refers particularly to her "lands at a place called Wongogn near Middletown." [2] Thus it seems that the last and sole heir of these natives, who had owned this northern tract of Indian land, was Scipio Two Shoes, Indian servant of Colonel Whiting. In 1723 he sold this lot to his master, "being that whereon y^e^ Wigwams are now Standing." It is further stated that it was the same land that had been given to him by his grandmother. Colonel Whiting conveyed this land in 1744. It is then described as that "whereon the Wigwams were formerly standing." [3] So the old home of the aborigines was gone forever. There they had built their fort, in 1633, when they went to live under the protection of the Dutch. It had in time given place to the habitations of peace. One by one, they had stolen out of those wigwams and departed for the happy hunting-grounds of their fathers. At last, a solitary Indian youth stood there, to utter the farewell of his race.

The fort these Sequins erected was not a very substantial structure. Of the like an early writer gives us this description: "These Forts, some be fortie or fiftie foote square, erected of young trees, ten or twelve foote high, rammed into the ground, with undermining within, the earth being cast up for their shelter against the dischargements of their enemies, having loope-holes." [4] Such a fort could not have stood long against the spring floods. It was doubtless repaired frequently until the need for such a defence had passed. Then it was displaced by wigwams.

There is another tract of land in this neighborhood to which some historic interest attaches. It extended along the Connecticut River northward from the fort track, and connected it with the Dutchmen's bouwerie. The

[1] *Ibid.*, II: 81. [2] *Ibid.*, II: 557.

[3] *Hartford Land Records*, 5: 9; 7: 76; 21: 536; 23: 29, 30, 142, 364; 50: 117; 51: 169; 88: 359; *Hartford Probate Records*, 36: 83.

[4] Wood's *New England's Prospect*, 1865 edn., p. 94.

river has now washed away some of this land. A roadway that ran from the House of Hope to the Indian fort, was its boundary on the southwest. The lots into which this tract was divided, are designated in deeds as lying at a place called "Pequot Heads." It was an Indian custom, after their victories, to tie the scalps of their enemies to the tops of poles set up in a conspicuous place near their village, as a defiance and warning. Each great chief had a pole, which proclaimed his prowess. Sometimes the English were as barbarous in setting the heads of Indians on poles.[1] We conjecture that it was the practice of this custom by the Indians that gave this tract its name, which it received at an early date. It was admirably suited to the purpose, being in full view of all who went and came on the river. As Sequassen's tribe never had an opportunity to make such a collection of bloody trophies, except in the Pequot War, it seems probable and natural enough that, when he removed immediately afterwards to the South Meadow, he should dedicate this river's bank to that purpose. So these scalps dangled from their poles in the breezes for many a day. This incident led the English to name the tract "Pequot Heads." It is now in part the land along the Connecticut River, given to the City of Hartford by Mrs. Elizabeth Colt.

There were other places west of the river where the natives sometimes set up their wigwams. All along the Little River and its branches, they had their favorite fishing-places. Near them they encamped at times. One of their resorts in Hartford was known by the Indian name "Pesiponck." It was near the intersection of Broad and Grand streets. The fact is disclosed in the will of Captain Thomas Watts. In 1683, he bequeathed to Martha Hannison "$7\frac{1}{2}$ acres of Land called by the name of Pesiponck." This was the southern part of a lot that originally belonged to William Andrews. The Rocky Hill brook ran through it. The name "Pesiponck," or Pesuppauog in the Narragansett tongue, means, literally, "they are sweating." It indicates that there was once within the bounds of Hartford, probably in the hillside ascending westward from the brook, one of the Indians' peculiar bath-houses. Roger Williams gives

[1] Trumbull's *Hist. of Connecticut*, I: 115.

the following description of one: "This Hot-houſe is a kind of little Cell or Cave, ſix or eight foot over, round, made on the ſide of a hill, (commonly by ſome Rivulet or Brooke:) into this frequently the men enter after they have exceedingly heated it with ſtore of wood, laid upon an heape of ſtones in the middle. When they have taken out the fire, the ſtones keep ſtill a great heat: Ten, twelve, twenty, more or leſſe, enter at once ſtarke naked, leaving their coats, ſmall breeches (or aprons) at the doore, with one to keepe all: here doe they ſit round theſe hot ſtones an houre or more, taking Tobacco, diſcourſing, and ſweating together; which ſweating they uſe for two ends: Firſt, to cleanſe their skin: secondly, to purge their bodies, which doubtleſſe is a great meanes of preſerving them, and recovering them from diſeaſes eſpecially from the French diſease, which by ſweating and ſome potions, they perfectly and ſpeedily cure: when they come forth (which is matter of admiration) I have ſeene them runne (Summer and Winter) into the Brooks to coole them, without the leaſt hurt." [1] It seems, therefore, that this was the first Turkish bath-room in Hartford.

Let us cross the Connecticut River to East Hartford, to locate the Indian fort of the Hockanum tribe, whose residence was within the ancient bounds of the town. Tradition and the discovery of Indian relics fix the location of this fort at a place long known as "Fort Hill." Concerning this place, Goodwin says: "Traces of such an enclosure still remain in Goodwin's pasture, one-fourth of a mile east of the postoffice. . . . The steep hillside having been its defence and outlook on three sides, and an embankment and palisades upon the north." [2] This is north of the Hockanum River, and south of Burnside Avenue. The site is readily recognized by the excavation of sand which composed the hill. No place could have been more wisely chosen by the Indians. Its elevation, proximity to a river once famous for its fishing, and the adjoining swamp, were features considered desirable by the natives.

[1] "Williams' Indian Key" in *Narr. Club Publications*, I: 211, 212; Trumbull's *Indian Names of Connecticut*, p. 51.

[2] Goodwin's *Hist. of East Hartford*, pp. 18, 23.

The documentary evidence that this was once the site of their Indian fort is found in the record of Sergeant William Buckland's home lot. He died in 1724, and left to his wife Elizabeth and three sons, his "home lott between y^e^ country road and y^e^ Pine Swamp or y^e^ Indian Fort." The younger sons deeded to William Buckland, who sold to Colonel John Pitkin. This lot is mentioned in the town votes in connection with the road that was laid out eastward in 1679.

The Indian history of this fort, if known, would probably recite some stories of sanguinary warfare. The one-eyed Tantonimo is thought by some to have chosen it as his stronghold in 1656, when he had a quarrel with Sequassen and Uncas. The natives who lived there were in reality a band of the Podunks. Tantonimo was a sachem of one part of this tribe. He had given refuge to a young Indian, who had killed a sagamore living at Mattabeset, a kinsman of Sequassen. The latter chief had then returned to Hartford. Probably he was living at the fort in the South Meadow, with the other Indians. He took up the quarrel, and made an ally of Uncas who, also, had a grievance against the Podunks. The General Court made an effort to adjust the matter. It failed. The parties were then allowed to fight, only it was stipulated that it should not be on the west side of the river, nor to the injury of any on the east side. The forces are said to have met near the Hockanum River — a very advantageous place for Tantonimo, with a stronghold near at hand. They did not fight, however, for Uncas, fearing the result, contented himself with a threat to bring upon the Podunks the dreadful Mohawks. He afterwards used their fear of this tribe to effect his purpose by strategy.[1] With this episode, Sequassen disappears from our history. He probably died soon afterwards.

The chief seat of the Podunk Indians was near the northern boundary of East Hartford. Here we locate another native fort. Adriaen Block's narrative, in speaking of the Indians along the river, makes the following statements: "In the year 1614 they had a village resembling a fort for protection

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 304, 305; De Forest's *History of the Indians*, pp. 249–252.

against the attacks of their enemies. They are called Nowaas and the Sagamore was named Moraheick. This place is situated in latitude 41° 48′." As Block gave the name of their sachem and their Indian word for bread, we may infer that he had some intercourse with them or visited their village. The place has been identified on the best authority as Podunk fort. The name "Nowaas" in Dutch, says Dr. Trumbull, was equivalent to "Nowashe," the name borne in the native tongue by the land between the Podunk and Scantic rivers. Stiles states that the early records of Windsor indicate that the first settlers did not call these natives "Podunk Indians," but probably "Mohegans." They are so named in Tantonimo's deed of South Windsor lands in 1636. "Podunk" means "place of fire." Perhaps the stream was so called because of the proximity of their village fires, and the English gave them the name of their residence. There seems to have been some relationship between these Indians and the Mohegans, antedating the marriage of Arramamet's daughter, Songonosk, to Joshua, the son of Uncas.

The site of their Indian village or fort is approximately determined by the land records. The southern boundary of the Podunk lands was south of the former mouth of the river, and just north of a lot, granted in 1644 to Samuel Ketchell. Here the town built a division fence in 1650. From Tantonimo, Thomas Burnham and certain partners bought a large tract of the Indian land. A controversy arose concerning it. The southernmost strip of this tract passed to William Williams, to whom the town confirmed it in 1662. In the records, it is bounded "on land now in y^{e} management of Thom: Burnam: wher y^{e} fort stood on y^{e} North." The General Court finally made a division of the land claimed by Burnham, among the Indians, who sold their lots from time to time to English owners.[1] An extant drawing of the western portion of this land, shows that the Podunk River then entered the Connecticut farther north than at present.[2] The Indian tract was mainly north

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 306; *Windsor Land Records*, 2: 100; *Hartford Land Records*, 2: 103.

[2] *State Archives: Private Controversies*, I: 42.

of the stream, running to a point at the southwest end by the river's side. In its course, the Podunk River, at its most northerly point within the tract where the fort stood, made a semi-circular curve southward. Its former channel can now be traced by the swale. The land thus partially surrounded by the river is high ground, and, without other evidence, would seem to have been the location of the fort. Here tradition also has located it. Indian relics have been found on this site in great abundance. It is only about one-third of a mile in a direct line to the Connecticut River. The Dutch navigator could easily have seen this fort from the deck of the *Onrust*. Part at least of the intervening tract was a planting-ground. Block refers to their cultivation of maize as if he had seen it. How long this Indian fort remained can not be determined. It continued for many years to be the site of their Indian village. Probably this declined rapidly after King Philip's War, when some of these natives sided against the English and went on the war-path never to return. This site is not far west of the main highway in South Windsor.

Of all the Indian forts along the Connecticut River, this of Podunk has the best title to fame. In prehistoric times it was doubtless the stronghold of a large population. They had been greatly wasted before the coming of the white man. Thence, Wahginnacut went to Boston in 1631, to invite the settlement of the English. In this fort, Natawanute and Sequassen were often visitors. There the sachem Arramamet spent some of his later years. At its councils, the wily Uncas, and Foxen, his crafty adviser, plotted mischief among the river bands. One of its last Indian owners was Toto's squaw — Toto of Windsor, who is said to have revealed to the English, in 1675, the plot against Springfield.[1] That timely warning of danger saved the town from a massacre.

Unless we give unwarranted authority to tradition, we must conclude that it was somewhere within these Podunk lands that the greatest tragedy of our Indian history was enacted — the execution of Miantinomo. It may almost be said that this was the sequel to Uncas's destruction of Sequassen's wigwams in the South Meadow, for the warfare

[1] Hutchinson's *History*, I: 295; Stiles's *Hist. of Windsor*, I: 110, 118, 130, 131.

Miantinomo thereafter waged against Uncas did not cease until the Narragansett chief was a captive in the fortress at Mohegan. The victor brought his prisoner to Hartford, as ordered. There the Governor and magistrates referred the disposition of his life to the Commissioners of the United Colonies, who met in Boston, September 7, 1643. Miantinomo was a prisoner, meanwhile, in Hartford's jail. The final decision arrived at by the counsel of five ministers was, that "Uncas was advised to take away the life of Myantenomo," but in his own jurisdiction and not in the English plantations. "According to this agreement," says Winthrop, "the commissioners, at their return to Connecticut, sent for Onkus, and acquainted him therewith, who readily undertook the execution, and taking Miantunnomoh along with him, in the way between Hartford and Windsor (where Onkus hath some men dwell,) Onkus' brother, following after Miantunnomoh, clave his head with an hatchet, some English being present." [1] The plan the commissioners had made was that Uncas should be sent for to come to Hartford "with some considerable number of his best and trustyest men." This he doubtless did, lodging them among his kindred at Podunk. The purpose was to provide against the rescue of Miantinomo by his own people, which was feared. No other place between Hartford and Windsor than Podunk could have been referred to. That was, in a sense, within the jurisdiction of Uncas. Thus, at some unknown spot not far from Hartford, the Narragansett chief, who occupies the most conspicuous place in the romance of Indian heroes, met his death. Those who review such events in the clearer light of this age, can hardly think it strange that, when John Eliot, the "apostle to the Indians," being in Hartford at a council of ministers, assembled a congregation of natives to hear his plea for the Gospel, and asked them "whether they were willing to accept of Jesus Christ, the Savior, as he had now been presented to them," the sachems and old men scornfully and angrily answered, "No." [2]

[1] Winthrop's *History*, II: 155, 157–162; *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 10–12, 14, 15; Caulkins's *Hist. of Norwich*, 1874 edn., pp. 34–37.

[2] De Forest's *History of the Indians*, p. 252.

An interesting incident of Hartford's Indian history occurred in 1675. In the autumn, the warehouse and barn of Major James Richards, on the south bank of the Little River, were destroyed by fire. The property had originally belonged to Governor Hopkins. The Indians were suspected of setting the fire. In writing of the affair to Governor Winthrop, Major Richards states that Massecup had been at his house shortly before the flames broke out.[1] His letters also give us more interesting information. They tell us that Massecup was Miantinomo's son and a brother of the Narragansett sachem, who was Canonchet. The records state that Sequassen was allied to and an intimate confederate of Miantinomo.[2] In 1670, Massecup [Masseeckup] had been the first signer of the Indian deed to the English, for which reason a Hartford street now bears his name. It seems probable, therefore, that Miantinomo had made a marriage alliance with Sequassen's family, and that his son was, in 1670, the head of the tribe. As information had been received that the Indians were planning an attack on Hartford, and flankers near certain houses of the town had been ordered, this incident created great excitement.[3] "The indian men were all commanded into the fchoolhoufe and a guard fet," wrote Major Richards, "for the people were foe inraged that we had much a doe to keepe them from falling upon them." The Indians sent word to Canonchet of Massecup's captivity. Finally ten hostages were given as a pledge of their loyalty. Massecup was among them. One of the number escaped. The others were confined for some time in a house provided for the purpose, apparently Daniel Garrad's on the south side of Pearl Street.[4] The authorities were convinced, later, of the Indians' loyalty, but Massecup's confinement continued. He was in the prison from 1677 to 1679.[5] Many of these

[1] *Winthrop Papers* in MS. collections of Mass. Hist. Soc.

[2] *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 11. [3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 267, 375. [4] *Ibid.*, II: 376–380.

[5] There is some satisfaction, under the circumstances, in the following items from John Talcott's *Account Book*, showing that this hostage received hospitable treatment: "To a trucking Cloath coat being 2 yards delivered to Mafecup," "Pair of britches for Mafecup in prifon," "To Mafecup pint liq^{rs}," "More," "To Mafecup medifons in his sicknefs," "To one p^{t} of Liq^{rs} to Mafecup for gripings, 1^{d}: mor p^{t} 1^{d}."

Hartford Indians enlisted in King Philip's War and did good service. There were eight warriors under the command of Captain Nassehegan, who did scout duty. To the loyalty of the River Indians, the Colony owed much in those troublesome times.

All authorities agree that the remnant of the Suckiaug tribe removed finally to Farmington. In 1725, there were living in the South Meadow, it is said, about thirty or forty natives who depended largely upon the charity of the inhabitants. At Farmington they were absorbed in the Tunxis tribe. Nine Indians claiming rights in the Suckiaug land had signed the deed of 1670. One of these was Wawarme, "sister and only heir of Sequassen." Perhaps she was the mother of Massecup. Another was Currecombe, the later story of whose family can be followed in the history of the Christian Indians, who removed from the West Woods of Farmington to Brotherton, New York. Of the others we have no trace. It is probable that there is an Indian burying-ground somewhere in the South Meadow, where many of the natives, who once lived there, sleep. So the race, whose wigwams were clustered underneath Hartford's elms, has disappeared and left its memorials to the white man.

CHAPTER VII

THE DUTCH AND THEIR HOUSE OF HOPE

On the banks of the Little River, in the spring of 1636, two types of European civilization met, to contest their rights in the western world. One was the English colonist, with all the ideals of his Puritan faith, seeking a new home for himself and his children. The other was the Dutch trader, satisfied with the liberality that is bred in an adventurous life, a soldier of no mean fame and a clever merchant, seeking the profits of the wilderness. Whether it be credited to their virtues or faults, the fact is that these two were unfitted by their character and training to live together as good neighbors. One or the other must prevail. They met like two adverse currents of the sea. One was moving eastward from Manhattan, the other westward from Plymouth Rock. There could not but be a surge in the waters; and, this conflict, which is illustrated so clearly in our local history, was, in reality, the same that then engaged like elements elsewhere. It may seem to be insignificant in its issues and petty in its details, but underneath all was the vital question, whether the spirit and arms of England or Holland were, in the end, to control the destiny of the American colonies. That was not a matter that kings could settle. It was determined by the genius of colonization — that wonderful spirit which multiplies homes under adversities and makes the wilderness blossom like the rose. Puritan emigration soon overcame the advantages of early occupation by Dutch traders. Whatever may have been the right of their respective claims on the Connecticut River, this spirit of colonization animated the Puritan governor, when he told DeVries, the Dutch navigator, that "it was a sin to let such rich land, which produced such fine corn, lie uncultivated." These words were not offered as a justification for any unlawful act. From the colonists' point

of view, this was thought to be sufficient reason for insisting upon their rights of ownership. The author will attempt merely a recital of the facts involved in this controversy between the Dutch and the English, leaving the reader to exercise his judicial faculties, or to render a verdict, as most writers have done, according to his prejudices.

The discovery of the Connecticut River has been generally attributed by historians to Adriaen Block. In 1614, having completed his yacht, the *Onrust* [Restless], he set sail from Manhattan, to explore the bays and rivers to the eastward. He ascended the river as far as the falls. Because of the quality of its waters, he named it *Versche Rivier* [Fresh River], though it was called in the Indian tongue *Quinnituk-ut* [on long river]. The early settlers often spoke of it as the "Great River," in distinction from the stream that emptied into it, named the "Little River." To the westward at Manhattan, through the voyage of Henry Hudson in 1609, the Dutch had secured the rights of discovery and trade. Accordingly, on October 11, 1614, the States General had granted to the "Directors of New Netherland," for a period of three years, the right "exclusively to visit and navigate to the aforesaid newly-discovered lands lying in America, between New France and Virginia, the sea-coasts whereof extend from the fortieth to the forty-fifth degree of latitude, now named New Netherland." [1] This privilege expired by limitation and a renewal was refused.[2] Occupation and exploration continued as before, until June 3, 1621, when the States General granted a patent to the West India Company, investing it with rights of government and trade between Newfoundland and the Straits of Magellan. No parallels of latitude were specified, but New Netherland was understood to be included. This company became effective in 1623, and for many years was the representative of Holland in the western world.

It is not known that any European visited the Connecticut River for nine years after its discovery.[3] Then the

[1] Brodhead's *History of New York*, I: 63. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 89, 90.

[3] Brodhead erroneously located the scene of Jacob Eelkens' ill treatment of an Indian sachem, in 1622, on the Connecticut River near Wethersfield (Brodhead's *History*, I: 146, 152, 168). The original account, in Wassenaer's *Historie*, states that it happened at "Sickenames" (*Doc. Hist. of N. Y.*, 8° edn. III: 45, 46). The

West India Company began the location of fortified trading posts in New Netherland. Several ports were built, and it was afterwards claimed that in 1623 the Dutch took possession of the Connecticut River, and began the erection of the House of Hope.[1] This is very doubtful; but, if true, it was not a factor of any importance in the subsequent controversy. The Dutch traders did visit the coast as far east as Cape Cod, at intervals for years, and perhaps entered the Connecticut River.

In 1626, the Pilgrims of Plymouth began to trade. They soon established a southern port at Manomet, on Buzzard's Bay, twenty miles from their plantation, all the distance except a "carry" of five miles being a waterway. Here they located a trading house and built a pinnace.[2] The following spring they were surprised to receive a friendly letter from Isaak de Rasières, Secretary of the Dutch government at Manhattan, the purport of which was an invitation to trade.[3] In his reply, Governor Bradford, while reciprocating their good wishes, expressly cautioned the Dutch against trading within the territory granted by his Majesty the King of England to the Council for New England, which extended to the fortieth degree of latitude. To this the Dutch responded, maintaining their right to trade in those parts, which, they claimed, they had carried on for twenty-six years. The Plymouth governor could not be thus outdone, and replied that the English had begun to navigate and plant thereabouts in the time of Queen Elizabeth, "well nigh forty years ago as appeareth by her patents and royal grants." This correspondence of 1627 culminated in a visit from the Dutch secretary in the autumn, and at that time Governor Bradford urged upon the Dutch the necessity of clearing their title to plant in those parts, "lest it be a bone of division" between them.[4]

historian identified that name with "Sequin," but it was the Indian designation of Mystic River (*Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 13).

[1] *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, New Ser., II: 276 and note; *Holland Documents*, I: 290; *Doc. Hist. of N. Y.*, 8° edn. III: 49, 50. Cf. Brodhead's *History*, I: 151 n., 153 n.; Winthrop's *History*, I: 135.

[2] Bradford's *History*, p. 221. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 222, 223.

[4] *1 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, III: 51 ff.; *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, New Ser., I: 362 ff.

The English evidently considered that they had legal rights antedating those of the Dutch, and superior to theirs within certain parallels of latitude. Bradford, like other early historians, dated the discoveries of Englishmen from the voyages of the Cabots, and their occupation from the venture of Bartholomew Gosnold in 1602.[1] King James I had by patent, in 1606, opened all the territory between the thirty-fourth and forty-fifth degrees north latitude to two companies, the southern being the London or Virginia Company, and the northern the Plymouth Company. On November 3, 1620, seven months before the date of the West India Company's charter, he had reconstituted the latter, with extraordinary powers, as the Council for New England, including the territory between the fortieth and forty-eighth parallels. This was the parent corporation of all early grants. The Pilgrims, and other English settlers later, based their rights upon these facts, and they entertained no intention of abandoning them, however they might be involved in disputes with the Dutch at Manhattan or elsewhere.

The subsequent conduct of the Plymouth traders is evidence of this attitude. In the above intercourse with the Dutch, they had learned, as probably also from the Indians, of the existence and location of the Connecticut River. The former had commended it unto them, says Bradford, "for a fine place both for plantation and trade, and wished them to make use of it." They had, however, been otherwise engaged. Yet when they began their trading they accepted these proposals, though not in the way of colonization under the West India Company, which the Dutch had desired. The sequel should be given in their historian's own language: "And having now good store of comodities, and allso need to looke out wher they could advantage them selves to help them out of their great ingagments, they now begane to send that way to discover y^{e} same, and trade with y^{e} natives. They found it to be a fine place, but had no great store of trade; but y^{e} Indeans excused y^{e} same in regard of y^{e} season, and the fear y^{e} Indans were in of their enemise. So they tried diverce times, not with out profite,

[1] Bradford's *History*, p. 77; Hutchinson's *History*, I: 1.

but saw y^e^ most certainty would be by keeping a house ther, to receive y^e^ trad when it came down out of y^e^ inland."[1] This passage clearly refers to early ventures on the Connecticut River, conducted, doubtless, by Edward Winslow, and the most natural interpretation is that these visits were made between 1627 and 1631.[2] Brodhead, the Dutch historian, admits that Winslow made a voyage thither in 1632, and "pitched upon a place for a house."[3] The date was certainly before the settlement of the Dutch in 1633, for the Governor and magistrates of Massachusetts, when examining the matter in 1643, received from Winslow himself the testimony that he had "discouered the said fresh Riuer when the Duch had neither trading house nor any pretence to a foot of land there," and the Commissioners of the United Colonies made this declaration ten years later.[4] The Indians on the river, moved by the desire to secure English allies against their enemies, and finding that the Plymouth people were not "very forward to build ther," solicited the help of Massachusetts. That was the purpose of Wahginnacut's journey to Boston in 1631, in which he was disappointed. Then the Plymouth traders, in 1633, sought the partnership of Massachusetts in such a venture; but, failing to secure it, they determined to make a beginning themselves.[5]

Such was the situation at the time the pioneers of these two nations met on the Connecticut River. Each party had its own view of rights secured by discovery and established by patent. These were in dispute between their home governments, and, in fact, were irreconcilable except by an arbitration then uncommon, or the fortunes of war. The Dutch were the first on the ground. Late in the spring of 1633, acting under the authority of Wouter van Twiller, the newly appointed Director General of New Netherland,

[1] Bradford's *History*, p. 311.

[2] Prince's *New England Chronology*, 1826 edn., p. 434; Goodwin's *Pilgrim Republic*, p. 371.

[3] Brodhead's *History*, I: 210; *New England's Memorial*, Davis's edn., App. p. 395.

[4] *Coll. Rec.*, X: 16; Trumbull's *History*, I: 30; Hutchinson's *History*, I: 43.

[5] Bradford's *History*, pp. 312, 313; Winthrop's *History*, I: 125.

Jacob van Curler with six others, sailed up the river, and, having made a treaty with the Indians, June 8th, began to erect a blockhouse on the southern bank of the Little River. This they surrounded with a redoubt, and two cannon were mounted for its defence. They named it the "Huys de Hoop" [House of Hope], but for what special reason we are not told.[1] The Plymouth authorities, returning home after the disappointment of their visit to Governor Winthrop in July, at once made preparations to establish their river trading post. In the hold of their "great new barke," they stowed the frame of a house, with boards and nails to complete it, and such provisions as were necessary, and, under the command of Lieutenant William Holmes, their resolute expedition set sail. The house had been prepared partly as a defence against the Pequot Indians, who, it was expected, would be displeased because they were to carry with them Natawanute, the exiled sachem of Windsor, and restore him to his ancient domain. They arrived at the House of Hope, probably, September 16th, not surprised to find the Dutch located on the river, nor expecting any gracious welcome. "When they came up y^{e} river," says Bradford, "the Dutch demanded what they intended, and whither they would goe; they answered, up y^{e} river to trade (now their order was to goe and seat above them). They bid them strike, & stay, or els they would shoote them; & stood by ther ordnance ready fitted. They answered they had comission from y^{e} Gov^{r} of Plimoth to goe up y^{e} river to such a place, and if they did shoote, they must obey their order and proceede; they would not molest them, but would goe one. So they passed along, and though the Dutch threatened them hard, yet they shoot not. Coming to their place, they clapt up their house quickly, and landed their provissions, and left y^{e} companie appoynted, and sent the barke home; and afterwards palisadoed their house aboute, and fortified them selves better. The Dutch sent word home to y^{e} Monhatas what was done; and in proces of time, they sent a band of aboute 70. men, in warrlike maner, with collours displayed, to assaulte them; but seeing them strengtened, & that it

[1] Other forms of the name that occur in early literature are: "Fort Hope," "Fort Good Hope," "The Dutch House, the Hope," and "House of Good Hope."

would cost blood, they came to parley, and returned in peace." [1] Thus the first chapter of this conflict was ended.

The above incident brings into the light one fact that now becomes important: the native inhabitants, to whom the river lands had originally belonged, had found in the English the allies they had sought. Some years before, this tribe had been subdued by the Pequots, and made tributary to them. Their cause had now been espoused by the English in a most public manner, by the restoration of Natawanute. Nor is it supposed that the visit of Wahginnacut to Governor Winthrop had been entirely without results. In this course the English may have been actuated by justice or policy. Perhaps they were pleased to be prompted by both. The Dutch, on the other hand, had for some years maintained friendly relations in trade with the Pequots — ever since 1626, when Peter Barentsen overcame the prejudice caused by Jacob Eelkens's treachery at Sickenames. As traders it was naturally their practice to consider the advantages, to be gained by their friendship. Now, therefore, in the matter of securing grants of land from the Indians, the alliances of each party were of great value.

We have no record of any deed signed by the Indians, in which they conveyed Suckiaug lands to the Dutch. The evidence the latter presented in a subsequent statement of their case, was the record of a treaty made with the Indians, embodying the rights of both parties and witnessed by the Dutchmen who were present, as the practice was on some other occasions. This record is as follows:

"Condition and Agreement entered into between Commissary Jacob van Curler and the Chiefs of Sickenames, on the 8th of June, 1633 as follows:

The aforesaid Curler, and the sachem named Wapyguart or Tattoepan, chief of Sickenames river, and owner of the Fresh river of New Netherland, called, in their tongue, Conettecuck, have amicably agreed for the purchase and sale of the tract named Sickajoock, a flat extending about one league down along the river and one-third of a league in width to the high land, and beyond the kill upwards, being a flat extending to the next adjoining little stream,

[1] Bradford's *History*, pp. 313, 314.

on condition that all tribes might freely, and without any fear or danger, resort to the purchased land for the purposes of trade; and whatever wars might arise between them and others, may be waged or carried on without any of them entering on our said territory. It is further expressly conditioned by this contract, and assented to by the aforenamed chief, that the Sequeen should dwell with us, all at the request, and to the great joy of the Sequeen Altarbaenhoot, and all interested tribes. This has taken place, on the part of the Sequeen, with the knowledge of Magaretinne, chief of Sloop's Bay. The chief of Sickenames is paid for the said land by Jacob Curler one piece of duffels, twenty-seven ells long; six axes, six kettles, eighteen knives, one sword-blade, one shears, and some toys. All which was signed by Jacob van Curler, Frederick Lubbersen, Gillis Pieters, Claes Jans Ruyter, Domingo Dios, Barent Jacobs Cool, and Pieter Louwerensen." [1]

It does not seem that there are sufficient reasons to doubt the main fact set forth in this record. The English at Hartford, and the Commissioners of the United Colonies, it is true, challenged the claim, and asked to see the conveyance. Probably no Indian deed was given, or it would have been produced then or later. Still, such a purchase was inherently probable. There were then no reasons why the Dutch could not have secured land from the Pequots, as they repeatedly claimed they had done and the record asserts, for that tribe were then their friends, though they soon had a falling out, because the Dutch killed a Pequot chief.[2] The sachem named as the grantor, Wapyquart, was doubtless the same as Wopigwooit, who is thought to have been the Pequot conqueror of the Sequins.[3] They

[1] *Holland Documents*, II: 139, 140. See also *Ibid.*, I: 128, 543; *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, I: 271, 272; and *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 172, 175; X: 65, 66.

[2] O'Callaghan's *History*, I: 157; Bradford's *History*, p. 349.

[3] Wopigwooit was the son of Woipeguand, sachem of the Pequots, and grandson of Muckquntdowas, whose father was Tamaquashad the earliest known chief of that tribe (De Forest's *History*, pp. 66, 67). The spelling "Wapyquart" is nearer that generally used. Governor Stuyvesant has "Nepequate" (*Ply. Col. Rec.*, X: 66); Hazard, "Nepaquate" (*State Papers*, II: 263); Trumbull, "Nepuquash" (*History*, I: 35); and Dr. Barnard "Nepaquash" (*Armsmear*, p. 18), following Stuart (*Hartford in the Olden Time*, p. 245). The Connecticut records spell the name "Nupequah," or "Nupequate" (*Conn. Rec., New England*, p. 124).

may also have obtained the assent of the Narragansett sachem, Magaretinne, [Miantinomo] to their neighborly arrangement with a band of Sequins, dwelling probably at the other end of the South Meadow, in Wethersfield. It is very improbable, however, that Natawanute, if he is the chief mentioned as "Altarbaenhoot," was a party to this transaction. At the date of the record, he is believed to have been in exile, having fled to the English for protection against the Pequots, and he was brought back by Holmes in the autumn. Apparently Governor Bradford did not doubt the Dutch purchase, for he says of the Plymouth traders: "They did y^e^ Dutch no wrong, for they took not a foote of any land they bought, but went to y^e^ place above them, and bought that tract of land which belonged to these Indeans which they carried with them, and their friends, with whom y^e^ Dutch had nothing to doe." [1] As for Sequassen, he testified in court, in 1640, that "he neu^r^ sould any grownd to the Dutch." [2] The evidence seems, therefore, to justify the conclusion that the Dutch bought from the Pequots their tract of land, which comprised the South Meadow, extending westward to the upland, and northward "a musket shot" distance along the river, to include Dutch Point. On the other hand, the English made their purchases of the Sequins, the ancient owners, and, in so doing, they declared their opinion that the subjugation of this tribe by the Pequots did not give to the conquerors the rights of ownership in the river lands. Lord Saye and Sele wrote in 1642 that the "Pequots had no just but a usurped title." [3] This, however, was the English view of the matter, and was earnestly challenged by the Dutch.

The representatives of these two nations now in disagreement over both their territorial rights and Indian titles, might, perhaps, have adjusted themselves to neighborly relations, had it not been for the settlement of the English under the Warwick Patent. The authorities at Plymouth and Boston had learned in 1633 of the Dutch venture upon the river. The former had sought to thwart it. Governor Winthrop, unwilling to join with Plymouth, for reasons that

[1] Bradford's *History*, p. 314.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 56.
[3] *Holland Documents*, I: 128.

must be a matter of conjecture, had, nevertheless, sent his bark to Manhattan with a commission to signify to the Dutch "that the king of England had granted the river and country of Connecticut to his own subjects," and, therefore, he desired them "to forbear to build there." He may have referred to the lands included in the Warwick Patent. Director van Twiller returned a courteous reply, but expressed the hope that the English would not intrude upon a Dutch possession until the King of England and the States General could adjust the matter.[1] He further protested in writing on October 25th to the commander of the Plymouth trading house, and sent an account of proceedings to his superiors in Holland.[2] It was without effect. "John Oldham and three with him" journeyed thither that season. During the next summer the Newtown agents went to spy out the land. Finally, in the autumn of 1635, the pioneers of Hartford settled upon the land north of the Little River, and, as already stated, the compromise of the following winter cleared the way for occupation, under the Warwick Patent, of those lands claimed by the Dutch. Thus in the year 1636, these traders of the West India Company found themselves surrounded by English colonists, who professed, and doubtless honestly believed, that the Warwick Patent had established their rights.

After the protest that the Dutch made to Elder William Goodwin, which was referred to the younger Winthrop, agent of the patentees at Saybrook fort, there was a lull in the storm for some years. The Dutch expressed their sentiments by protesting, and the English by ploughing. On June 9, 1639, the Dutch navigator DeVries arrived at the House of Hope, where Gysbert Opdyck was then the commissary. He thus narrates his experience as a peacemaker: "The commander gave me orders to make a protest against them, as they were using our own land, which we had bought of the Indians. Some of our soldiers had forbidden them to put the plough into it; but they had disregarded them, and had cudgelled some of the Company's

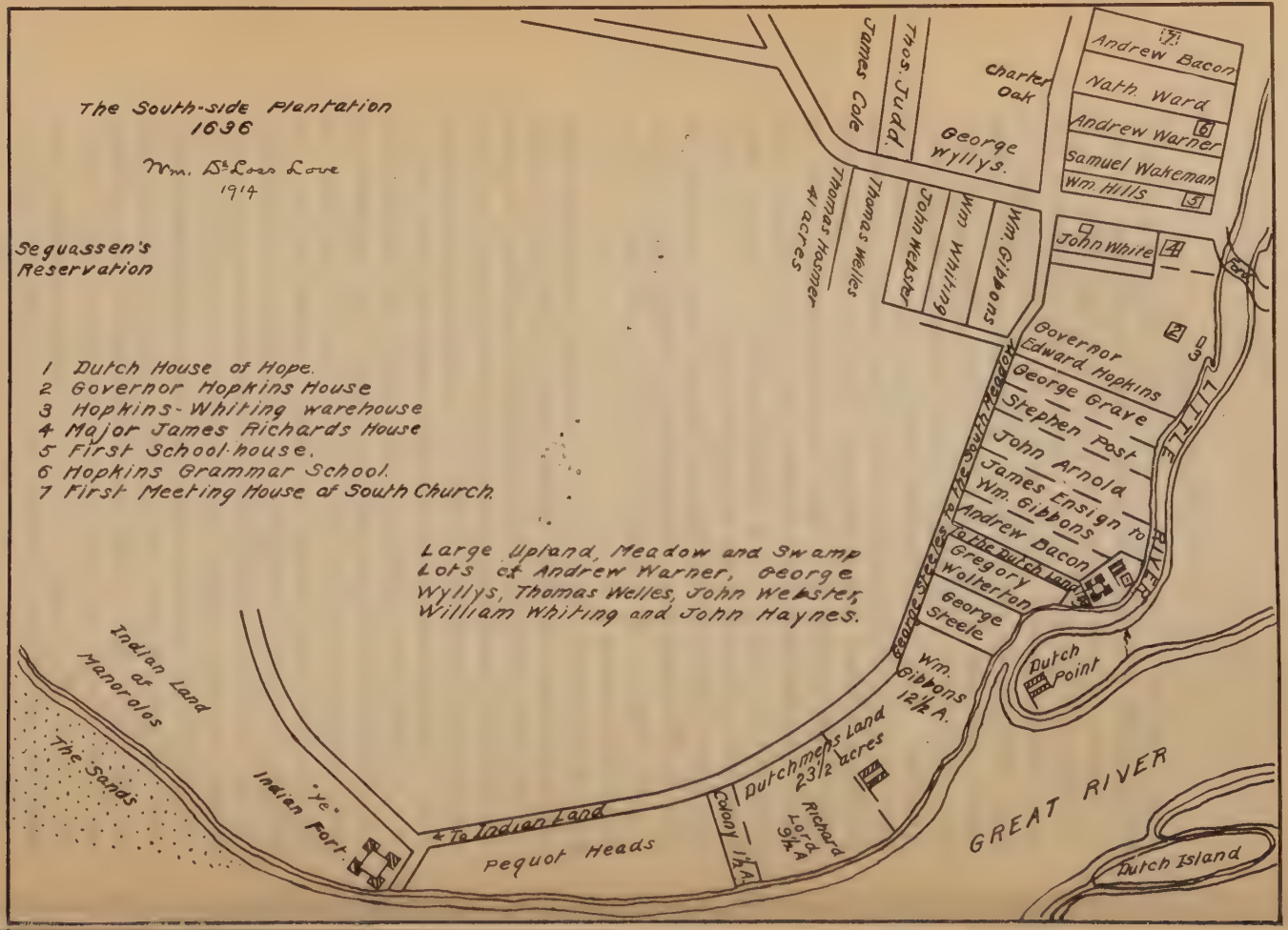
[1] Winthrop's *History*, I: 134; O'Callaghan's *History*, I: 152; Brodhead's *History*, I: 239.

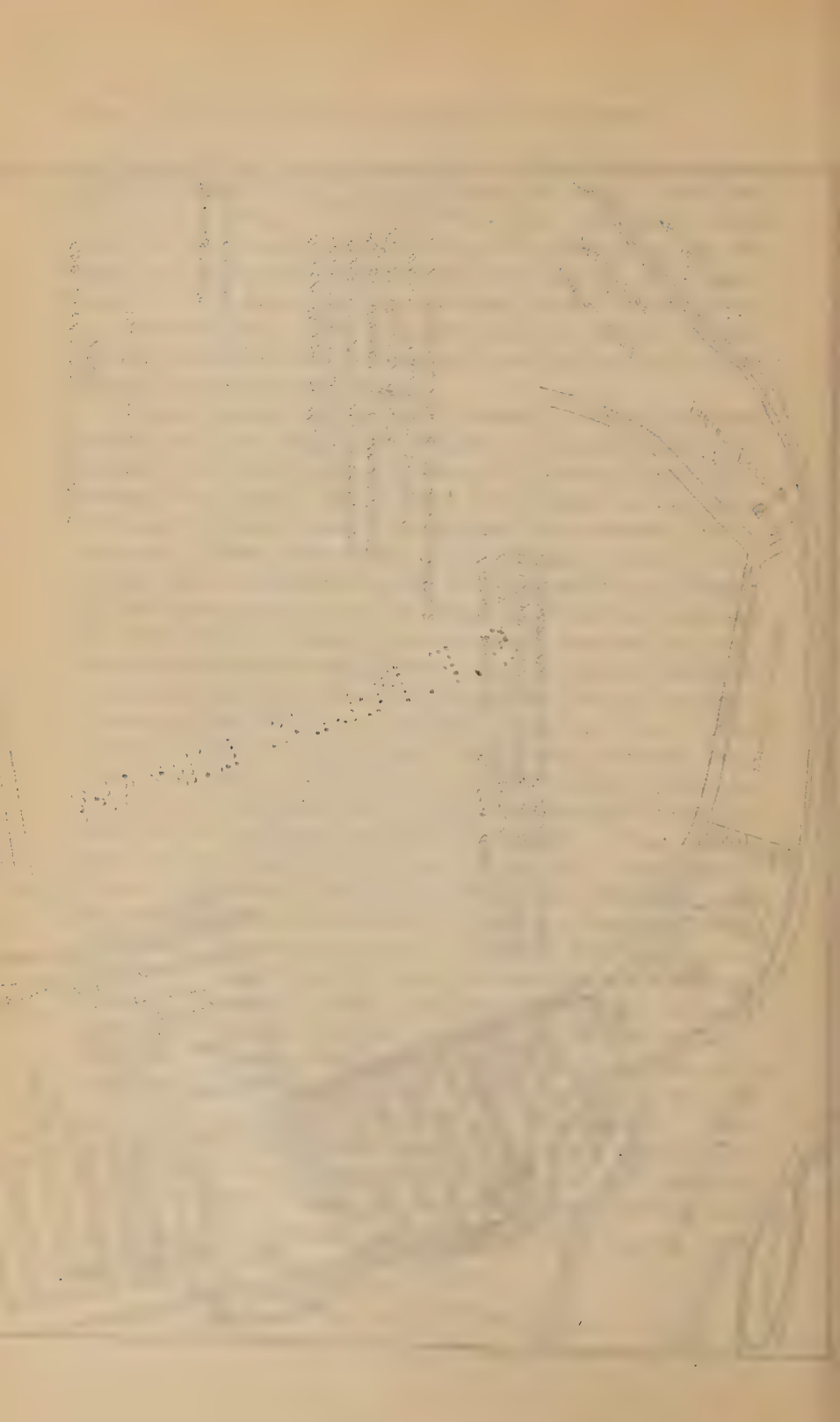
[2] O'Callaghan's *History*, I: 154, 155.

soldiers. Going there, I was invited by the English governor [John Haynes] to dine; when sitting at the table, I told him that it was wrong to take by force the Company's land, which it had bought and paid for. He answered that the lands were lying idle; that though we had been there many years, we had done scarcely anything; that it was a sin to let such rich land, which produced such fine corn, lie uncultivated; and that they had already built three towns upon this river in a fine country." [1]

The next spring trouble began in earnest. On April 23rd, by the new style reckoning of the Dutch, they told Governor Hopkins of their intention to plough "a piece of land lying behind Fort Hope," and forbade the English to interfere. The usual dispute concerning Indian titles ensued. Hopkins said "Show your right: we shall show ours." As a "bluff" that was about even, for in all probability the Dutch had no Indian deed, and the English no patent to show. The next day the Dutch began to plough the land in question, which had been distributed either to James Ensign or to Andrew Bacon, as these two lots were behind the fort.[2] Thereupon the English constable — who was most likely Thomas Hosmer — living near, came with a dozen men armed with sticks. With blows and shouts, they frightened the horses so they ran away. An hour later the Dutch resumed their ploughing, without hindrance. That night, however, the English sowed corn in the field. Commissary Opdyck protested in writing to Governor Hopkins, and Governor Hopkins protested to Commissary Opdyck. Then both parties resorted to a truce. On May 30th, one of the Dutchmen's mares strayed upon an Englishman's land, to feast on his green grass. Governor Hopkins's servant impounded it, and Opdyck went to Manhattan with a complaint. Three weeks later, "The English carried off," according to Dutch authorities, "in the twinkle of an eye, a cow and calf, and drove them to their pound." The General Court, being then in session, promptly adjudicated the matter as a case of trespass, for the cow and calf had been in an Englishman's corn patch. The decree was that

[1] "Voyages of DeVries," in *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, New Ser., III: 86.
[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. 222, 223, 240.


The South-side Plantation
1636
Wm. D.L. Love
1914
Seguassen's Reservation
1 Dutch House of Hope.
2 Governor Hopkins House
3 Hopkins-Whiting warehouse
4 Major James Richards House
5 First School-house.
6 Hopkins Grammar School.
7 First Meeting House of South Church.
Large Upland, Meadow and Swamp Lots of Andrew Warner, George Wyllys, Thomas Welles, John Webster, William Whiting and John Haynes.
James Cole
Thos. Judd
Charter Oak
George Wyllys.
Andrew Bacon
Nath. Ward
Andrew Warner
Samuel Wakeman
Wm. Hills
Thomas Welles
Thomas Hosmer
40 acres
John Webster
Wm. Whiting
Wm. Gibbons
John White
Governor Edward Hopkins
George Grave
Stephen Post
John Arnold
James Ensign to Wm. Gibbons
Andrew Bacon
To the Dutch Temple
Gregory Wolterton
George Steele
George Steele to the South Meadow
LITTLE RIVER
Wm. Gibbons 12½ A.
Dutch Point
Indian Land at Manoroles
The Sands
'ye' Indian Fort
To Indian Land
Pequot Heads
Colony 11½ A.
Dutchmens Land 23½ acres
Richard Lord 9¼ A
GREAT RIVER
Dutch Island



the Dutch could have their animals by paying, within three days, the damages and charges, and, if they did not the cow and calf would be sold. There was further excitement the next week, and the town had something to talk about. On June 28, 1640, as the Dutch story runs, "An English minister tooke [a load] of the hay which our masters servants had cut and made upon theire owne bought and paied for and possessed lands; tooke it away and applyed it to his own use without giuing any recompense or satisfaction." Opdyck at once "served him with a protest, at the house of the Governor who was not at home." It may be that the clergyman got on the wrong land, as laymen have since in the undefined lots of the South Meadow. Or, perhaps, the load of hay was a donation from one of his parishioners. If we must express an opinion upon such a delicate matter between two ministers, it looks very much as if the offender was Samuel Stone, who owned eight acres along the road to the Indian Land, near the Dutchmen's bouwerie, perhaps then considered by them a part of it. There was further friction in harvest time, but at last they had winter and peace for a season.

The conflict was renewed in the following year, by the vote of the North-side inhabitants, February 26th, to join doubtless with the South-side, to build a fence between the Dutchmen's land and the adjoining owners.[1] It is believed that this was the fence, a part of which, by Dutch testimony, the English began to build May 24th, driving posts in the ground around the fort, and with rails fencing it off in such a manner that the garrison could not use the wagon road to their wood and hay land. The Dutch at once tore it down. The most serious encounter had occurred on April 17th, when Peter Colet, Evert Duycking and Sybrant Sibols, who were ploughing a disputed field about the fort, were attacked by the English. They cut the trace ropes, drove off the horses, threw the plough into the river, and in the fracas knocked down and hurt one or more of the Dutchmen. It can be said on Dutch authority, that Governor Hopkins had given warning to his violent countrymen, which may have had some effect after such an encounter.

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 43.

At all events, it does not appear in Dutch testimony that, after the summer of 1641, they had any ill-treatment to complain of, except the English occupation of the lands they claimed and the impounding of their stray animals, wherein all inhabitants were treated alike. Such was the Dutchmen's presentation of their grievances.[1]

The English had a similar story. All their early complaints arose out of the disputed title to the lands in the South Meadow, which they had distributed among themselves. They had left for the Dutch a comparatively small tract. This was not fenced. Naturally, therefore, the Dutch animals strayed on the lands the English were cultivating. To protect their crops, they sought to fence their lands, which their Dutch neighbors would not permit, especially as such fences surrounded much of their fort and cut off access to their bouwerie. If a certain receipt for twenty-eight shillings, dated June 3, 1641, which John Carrenton gave to John Talcott, "for cetting vp of the rayles betwene the town & the diuch grond," represents the whole or one-half of the cost of this experiment, the English did not get far with it.[2] At that juncture Governor Haynes wrote to the Massachusetts authorities for advice, and Winthrop's narrative states the situation. "Letters came," he says, "from the governour, etc., of Connecticut for advice about the difference between them and the Dutch. The Dutch governour had pressed them hard for his interest in all Hartford, etc., as far as one might see from their house, alleging he had purchased as much of the Pequods, and threatened force of arms. They of the river alleged their purchase of other Indians, the true owners of the place, etc., with other arguments from our patent and that of Saybrook. We returned answer without determining of either side, but advising to a moderate way, as the yielding of some more land to the Dutch house (for they had left them but 30 acres). But the Dutch would not be thus pacified, but prepared to send soldiers to be billeted at their house. But it pleased the Lord to disappoint their pur-

[1] *Holland Documents*, I: 543 ff.; II: 141 ff.; *Ply. Col. Rec.*, X: 66–69; *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, New Ser., II: 276.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 8.

pose, for the Indians falling out with them, killed four of their men at their fort Orange, whereof three were English, who had gone to dwell among them, whereby they were forced to keep their soldiers at home to defend themselves; and Mr. Peter going for England, and being well acquainted with the chief merchants in Holland, undertook to pacify the West India company, but for want of commission from those of Hartford, the company there would not treat with him."[1]

These references are illuminating. The force of soldiers Director Kieft had prepared to send to Fort Hope, consisted of fifty men in two yachts, under the command of Johannes la Montagne.[2] Thus, possibly, the battle of Hartford narrowly missed taking place. Here, moreover, it appears as the English asserted, that the land claims of the Dutch were various and uncertain, covering sometimes all the river lands, and, at others, only the South Meadow. More than the latter tract, they had not bought from the Pequots, as their own record shows. And here is stated the position of the English, which was that they claimed under the Warwick Patent emanating from the Council for New England, as also by right of purchase from the original native tribe. They never abandoned this right of ownership, acquired, they asserted, "by purchase, patent and possession." So far as their colonial authorities could settle the matter, they were sustained after an examination by the Governor and Council of Massachusetts and by the Commissioners of the United Colonies.[3]

It is true that Rev. Hugh Peters, one of the delegation sent to England by Massachusetts in 1641, was asked to seek some adjustment of these differences in Holland. He was subsequently authorized by Governors Winthrop and Haynes to do so. Edward Hopkins also going that season to England, was empowered by the Connecticut General Court to arbitrate the matter. The Earl of Warwick, Lord Saye and Sele, and others in England, endeavored to assist them. Little, however, came of this peaceful attempt. Sir William Boswell, then ambassador at the Hague, suggested

[1] Winthrop's *History*, II: 38, 39. [2] Brodhead's *History*, I: 322.
[3] Winthrop's *History*, II: 155–157; *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 13, 175, 179, 182; X: 16.

a plan of procedure, in a letter dated January 22, 1641–2, which was probably brought back by Edward Hopkins.[1] Its concluding recommendation has furnished the text for much censure of the English. He advised "that in the mean tyme, th' English there doe not forbeare to put forward their plantacons, and crowd on, crowding the Dutch out of those places where they have [occupied] but without hostility or any act of violence." The fact is, however, that the crowding the English did, occurred before this letter was written; and the most hostile acts of the Dutch, after the English had abandoned violence and had attempted a peaceful settlement. In 1650, the four arbitrators, two of whom were chosen by each party, on examination of the English complaints, found that "most of the offences or grievances were things donn in the time and by the order and comaund of Monseir William Keift the former Gou^r^," in which they were undoubtedly correct.[2] He was a man, as Dutch historians have stated, who "hankered for war." Provoked by repeated conflicts with the English elsewhere, and taking advantage possibly of their abandonment of violence at Hartford, he encouraged the Dutch garrison in hostile measures for several years, so that, in 1646, they had "growne to a strange & vnsufferable boldnes."[3] They were charged with putting their cattle in English cornfields, buying stolen goods and refusing to return them upon equal satisfaction, persuading servants to run away from their masters, releasing criminals and harboring fugitives from justice, resisting and assaulting the watch with arms, marrying some couples refused at the English plantations, and finally, with receiving at the House of Hope an Indian captive who had fled from her mistress, refusing to deliver her up to the magistrate and consenting to her abuse and defilement by a Dutch servant.[4] Of the last offence, the agent himself had given information. It was a public affront to the morality of a Puritan community that had long been tried by their manner of garrison life. It kindled a

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 565, 566; *Holland Documents*, II; 150; Brodhead's *History*, I: 324.

[2] *Ply. Col. Rec.*, X: 18.

[3] *Ibid.*, IX: 64.

[4] *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 61, 64, 76–79, 181; X: 16.

blaze of indignation at the licentiousness that often made the Dutch trading post a curse.[1]

In 1650, these charges were reviewed at the meeting between the Commissioners of the United Colonies, and Peter Stuyvesant, then Director General of New Netherland; but William Kieft being then dead, they were referred to the authorities in Holland, or, in other words, buried with him. The decision of the arbitrators who made the award was, that the Dutch should retain all the lands they actually possessed at Hartford, and the remainder on both sides of the river should be and remain forever to the English.[2] This was ratified by the States General in 1656. Thus the occupation of the disputed lands by colonists became the factor that determined the issue. Within a few years, the mother countries being at war and colonial relations strained, the House of Hope was deserted. Then came Captain John Underhill, acting under a commission to prosecute a predatory warfare against the Dutch, and on the 27th and 28th of June 1653, he took possession of the House of Hope and its lands. On the door of the block house, he placed this notice: "I, John Underhill, do seize this house and land for the State of England, by virtue of the commission granted by the Providence Plantation." He claimed afterwards to have done so with the permission of the General Court, then in session at Hartford. This was disallowed by the Court, April 6, 1654, when it sequestered the property "in the behalfe of the Common wealth of England."[3] Three days later, peace was proclaimed between the two nations, and by the terms of the treaty, the English retained the property.

At this time the Dutch possessions consisted of four tracts of land as follows: 1. Twenty-three and one-half acres in the South Meadow, being their meadow, garden and wood lot, and lying between the Great River on the north, and the "highway from ye meadow gate to the In-

[1] See Letter of Lord Saye and Sele, in *Holland Documents*, I: 129; "Hoeren Eyland," Map of 1666, in Winsor's *Narr. and Crit. Hist.*, III: 333; and cf. Porter's *Historical Notices*, No. 2, p. 25. See also Bradford's *History*, p. 24; Wassenaar in *Doc. Hist. of N. Y.*, III: 33, 41; *Doc. Rel. to Col. Hist. of N. Y.*, I: 290; III: 342, etc.

[2] *Holland Documents*, I: 611; *Ply. Col. Rec.*, IX: 188–190.

[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 254, 275; *N. E. Register*, VI: 369.

dian Land" on the south. 2. One acre in the South Meadow, which "abutteth on the landing place in Little River on the eaft," and William Gibbons [James Ensign] and Gregory Wolterton [Andrew Bacon] on the south, and the Little River on the north. 3. Three acres, "lying on ye poynt of ye little meadow," now Dutch Point. 4. Two acres, "being an Island Lyeing near ye eaft Side of ye great river over against ye Sowth end of ye little meadow." [1] Captain Underhill laid claim to all this land by virtue of his seizure. On May 17, 1655, he petitioned the General Court for permission to sell and convey it. His request was refused. Apparently the matter was adjusted, as he sold it, July 18th, to William Gibbons and Richard Lord, reserving the State's right. When a division was made, March 5, 1659–60, the Gibbons share was twelve and one-half acres of the west end of the bouwerie. The Lord share was Dutch Point, the Island and nine and one-half acres of the "bouwerie" east of the Gibbons lot. The State received the one-acre tract, and the remaining one and one-half acres of the bouwerie, both of which were sold, March 11, 1662–3, to John Gilbert.[2]

There is no doubt as to the location of the House of Hope. It was on the one-acre tract, beside the Little River and adjoining the landing-place, from which a lane twenty-four feet wide led to the "highway from ye meadow gate to the Indian Land." [3] This road ran alongside of the bouwerie, between which and the lane about eight acres had been granted to Andrew Bacon and George Steele. Across the stream, eastward of the fort, was the neck that connected the low land of Dutch Point with the Little Meadow, so that the House of Hope was not far in a direct line from the Connecticut River. The mouth of the stream provided a good harbor. DeVries describes this location in these words: "This redoubt stands upon a plain on the margin of the river, and alongside it runs a creek to a high woodland." [4] The map of the Great River in 1666, while its

[1] *State Archives: Towns and Lands*, I: 76–91; *Original Distribution*, pp. 131, 304, 500.

[2] *Original Distribution*, p. 533.

[3] See Albert L. Washburn's "Map of the Dutch Land," in *The Hartford Times*, February 24, 1905, and Goodwin's Map of 1824.

[4] "Voyages of DeVries" in *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, New Ser., III: 86.

testimony may not have great weight in such a matter, places the "Huys de Hoop" on the south side of the stream, and not upon the Connecticut River. Moreover, this location alone meets the conditions of the Dutch authorities, who place the fort near the bouwerie, and yet where the fence erected by the English cut it off from that tract.

The House of Hope was a fortified redoubt. Such structures among the Dutch were usually built of logs, with stones or brick at the angles. Within there was a two-story block house, of commodious proportions, having a large Dutch fire-place at one end. About the house was an open court, with a hard earthen floor. At Fort Orange the building was twenty-six feet and nine inches long. Underneath there was a cellar. The first floor was divided by a partition. On the second, which was reached by a ladder, there was a court or storage room. Probably the House of Hope had an enclosed yard, with sheds for their horses and cattle, on the southeast side at the landing-place. In 1639, DeVries found "forty to fifty cherry trees" about it. Of their fruit he feasted the English governor, minister and chief men with their wives at the fort, when he sought their favor in securing a pardon for the minister's servant. The offender had become drunk aboard a ketch in the river, and narrowly escaped a flogging at the whipping-post.

The ruins of this historic station of Dutch soldiers and traders survived for many a day. A burying-ground near it was discovered by chance in 1852. It is thought to have been the resting place of some of the inmates, who died during those early years. In 1819, when Dr. Abiel Holmes visited the place, he found there only some decayed timbers and a few Dutch bricks, one of which is preserved among the exhibits of the Connecticut Historical Society. In time these bricks became scattered, and the finding of them elsewhere has misled some, as to the fort's location. William Imlay, it is said, at last removed the mound of earth and débris to fill a swale, on the north side of the stream. A portion of this historic acre has passed peacefully into the possession of the City of Hartford, where its people might fittingly place a memorial to the buried hopes of their old neighbors.

CHAPTER VIII

PROPRIETORS OF HARTFORD

The people of Connecticut have many good reasons to praise the worldly wisdom of their forefathers. They were men of human ambitions, and hence deeply interested in getting on in the world. It does not detract from a high estimate of their moral virtues and religious character if we admit that they were sagacious, enterprising and far-seeing men, who sought, and promptly accepted, a good chance in the line of colonization. Like all emigrants to New England, they wished to settle where they would soon see the reward of their labors, and leave to their children a goodly heritage. Among such a people, the quality and extent of their lands were important. Thomas Hooker himself was frank to say, in 1634, that his flock wanted more and better land. Their attention had been turned toward the raising of cattle. This was then considered a promising venture, especially where there were large river meadows. Our records furnish many indications that this pastoral purpose directed the agricultural labors of the river plantations for some years. They all had extensive hay and pasture lands. Thus a considerable portion of the territory now occupied by the city of Hartford was used in early years for grazing and kindred purposes.

The original "writeing" in which Sequassen and his tribe conveyed the Suckiaug lands to Samuel Stone and William Goodwin in 1636, specified "all the land from Wethersfield bounds on the south, to Windsor bounds on the north, and the whole bredth from Connecticutt river on the east six large miles into the wilderness on the west." Our only authority for this statement is the confirmatory deed of 1670.[1] The grantees of the lost conveyance were, probably, the abovenamed and their associates, the "inhabitants"

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, I: 5, 6; Porter's *Historical Notices*, No. 1, pp. 4–7.

of the plantation. This grant "was afterwards upon further consideration renewed and enlarged" by Sequassen, at the desire of Mr. Haynes and the other magistrates. It then conveyed to them Sequassen's land as far westward "as his country went." As this occurred "severall yeares" before 1640, it may have been a factor in the readjustment of the relations between the English and the Indians following the Pequot War. If so, it doubtless provided that Sequassen's people should occupy a part of the South Meadow lands. This document, also, had disappeared before 1670. The confirmatory deed refers to the "full mention" of this grant in the conveyance of Pethus, sachem of the Tunxis Indians, to the English about 1640. The latter deed was of Farmington lands. It reserved a tract for the natives. On July 5, 1670, the surviving Suckiaug Indians confirmed these earlier grants. In this document the terms of that time are used. The purchase of Stone and Goodwin is referred to as having been made "in the behalfe of the present proprietors." This was true, though these proprietors were, in 1636, the legal plantation inhabitants. The gantees of 1670 were "Mr. Samuel Wyllys, Capt. John Talcott, Mr. John Allyn and Mr. James Richards, in behalfe of the rest of the proprietors of the land belonging to the township of Hartford, their heires and assignes forever." Such was the title and extent of their lands on the west side of the river. The western boundary in this general description was six miles from the river, as measured along the northern and southern lines. It was about five miles from it at Hartford. When Farmington was incorporated in 1645, the latter distance was given, perhaps for this reason. This territory included the present town of West Hartford, except that portion west of the old mountain road at Foote's Corners. This was added from Farmington in several tracts, after having been included many years in the West Division Society. The northern and southern boundary lines were periodically matters of controversy for many years, but the alterations were unimportant except to adjoining landowners.

On the east side of the Connecticut River the Podunk and Hockanum Indians were the native owners of the land.

The English at once saw the advantages of possessing it. The Windsor Plantation bought a tract opposite its territory in 1636.[1] At an early date Wethersfield did the same. The purchase of the latter plantation extended eastward from the river three miles.[2] On February 21, 1636–7, the General Court fixed the east side boundaries between those plantations and Hartford. It seems probable therefore that sometime in 1636, the inhabitants of Hartford's plantations made a purchase from the native owners. Possibly this was delayed in completion, or a purchase was first made of the east side meadows, and afterwards the upland was secured. The former tract was one of the early divisions of the plantation. The bargain was certainly completed and the upland was secured before or in 1640.[3] This conveyance also is lost, but references to the purchase are found in the records. The lands east of these "Three-mile Lots" had not been bought from the natives in 1672. Then the General Assembly, exercising jurisdiction under the charter, extended the bounds of Hartford eastward five miles. This tract was claimed by Joshua, sachem of the Niantic Indians, who died in 1676. A short time before his death he sold it to Major John Talcott, but no deed was executed. Upon the town's agreement to pay the stipulated sum to Joshua's executors, they deeded this tract, May 13, 1682, to Cyprian Nichols, Caleb Stanley and John Marsh, selectmen of Hartford.[4] Thus the original town came to include the territory between Bolton on the east, and Farmington on the west, now divided into Manchester, East Hartford, Hartford and West Hartford. East Hartford was incorporated as a separate town in 1783. From it, Manchester was set off and incorporated in 1823. West Hartford was created a separate ecclesiastical society in 1711, and incorporated as a town in 1854.

It is essential to an understanding of the early history of Hartford, that a careful study be made of the formation of its body of proprietors. The usual practice, in the settlement of new regions, was for a number of associated individuals to buy a large tract of land, and divide it among

[1] Stiles's *Hist. of Windsor*, I: 127, 128. [2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 7.
[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 21, 22.
[4] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 196, 205; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 6, 7.

themselves on the basis of the amount each had contributed to the purchase money, or the initial expenses of the enterprise. Such persons were termed "proprietors." It has always been assumed that this was the case in the settlement of the river plantations, but the conclusion has never been consistent with extant records. The inference is natural that proprietorship is based upon sharing the cost of the coats, hatchets, hoes and knives, which the English usually paid the natives for their lands. It has also been thought that proprietorship implies a participation in the original establishment of a plantation. Some have attributed to it a prominence among the founders of the river settlements that was denied to others, who seem to have been of equal or superior worth. These inferences are sometimes justified. In their application to Hartford, however, and, so far as we know, to its associated plantations, they have resulted in error and confusion, both among historians and genealogists. The claim here made may be summarized in the statement that the establishment of Connecticut's colonial government involved such a transition from plantation to town estate, that it was necessary to revise the list of legal inhabitants, who had hitherto been, in fact, the original proprietors, and this was accomplished by the formation of the body of proprietors of 1639.

The common statement that has been made concerning many an honored ancestor in Hartford, is that he was "an original proprietor in 1639." What does that mean? Not necessarily that a man shared directly in the purchase of the town's lands from the Indians. It does not affirm that he was surely among the first settlers of the plantation. There is documentary evidence that some of the proprietors were not. Nor does it prove that his social standing was superior to that of some who received grants of land by the town's courtesy. It means that in 1639, when, for reasons herein stated, the body of proprietors was constituted to determine who had a right to share in undivided lands, the man named was found to have been a legal inhabitant, and to have borne, by taxation upon his lands or estate for a greater or less period, a share in the plantation's financial burdens. He had thus become, in business terms, a stock-

holder in the plantation and was entitled to a stock dividend of land. The legal inhabitant, as already stated, was the unit of the franchise. He was also the unit in early distributions of land. As the first conveyances from the Indians, where known, were to the "inhabitants" as grantees, or to their body called the "plantation," so the lands acquired were divided among such inhabitants. We do not read of any proprietors in name, because these legal inhabitants were the owners and grantors. Others than these received grants of land in Hartford, both before and after the formation of the body of proprietors. Such settlers, however, either because they had not been inhabitants for some reason, or because they had arrived too recently to participate in the plantations' burdens, did not secure the standing of proprietors. Hence they had by right no share in the undivided lands when the time arrived for their distribution. The grants such settlers received were by "the town's courtesy." The other river plantations made the same distinction. Such was the practice elsewhere. In 1664, when there were common lands to be distributed in Cambridge, two lists were ordered to be made, one of those who had a "just right," and another of those whose claim was "in a way of free gift."

Leaving for another chapter the consideration of their order of plantation divisions, the result of its application was that the proportions of the inhabitants varied greatly. Upon these lands, rates were assessed to defray all their charges. The cost of the land purchased from the Indians was comparatively a small matter. One planter might advance the sum, to be repaid later by the inhabitants. William Pynchon bought such land at Springfield, and was reimbursed by a rate assessed upon the lots granted to the settlers. There were other and larger initial expenses. In the river settlements their remoteness made these considerable. For their circumstances, the annual plantation and colony rates were high. On February 9, 1637–8, the General Court was forced to provide for the payment of a debt. It was for £620, the "charges of the late designes of warr." Of this amount £251 2s. were apportioned to Hartford, to be raised by a rate probably assessed upon the acreage

of each.[1] Collectors were appointed in all the plantations. Thus by their payment of successive rates, the inhabitants were making investments in a corporation that had considerable tracts of undivided land. At any particular time the taxes each had paid during the period of his residence would be the amount of his investment, and hence his rightful share in the divisions.

All grants of land in the plantation divisions of Hartford were conditional. This was an important factor in their scheme of development. The first order, recorded by William Spencer under the date 1635, provided that if a settler had a lot granted to him and removed within four years, the lot should return to the town, the former owner receiving the worth of his labor upon it. If any person desired to sell his lot or lots within that time, he was first to offer them to the town for the valuation of his improvements; or, upon the town's approval, to sell at such a valuation to another. House-lots that were not built upon within a year were forfeited to the town. Nor were such rules restricting early sales peculiar to Hartford. They were made in Cambridge, Springfield and other settlements. There is no doubt that these rules were enforced. Some lots did return to the town. The time of other grantees was extended.[2] The town made offers to pay for improvements on some lots, and purchasers of others were approved.[3] Probably the lost plantation records contained evidence of such action. On January 14, 1639–40, the townsmen were ordered to examine all former bargains of land made by the inhabitants, and confirm or disannul the same. Planters as prominent as William Gibbons and Nathaniel Ward were fined for buying land in violation of the order, though their purchases were confirmed.[4] Indeed, as hereafter shown, the land records prove that sales were comparatively few before the expiration of the four years, and immediately

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 12. After King Philip's war, the Colony rate was increased from one penny on the pound to eighteen pence. The Court then appointed a committee to "size" each class of lands. The valuation in Hartford was: Home lots at 40 s. per acre; improved uplands 25 s. per acre on the south side, 20 s. per acre on the north side; meadow, one half at 50 s., the other half at 40 s. per acre. — *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 237, 292.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 13, 29, 30.

[3] *Ibid.*, I: 15, 36, 42.

[4] *Ibid.*, I: 15.

after the restriction was removed, they became numerous. It is obvious, therefore, that more land than a settler could improve or use was a burden to him. Such tracts were unsalable property. The owner was compelled to pay taxes upon them, but they yielded no income. Planters of large means could afford to take such land, and hold it until it could be sold. Others were satisfied to have them do so, for thus the rich paid the burden of the taxes. By this plan, all speculation in lands was for the time excluded. The settler's chance of reward depended upon his enterprise and labor. Apparent inequalities were thus righted. Hence in all their plantation divisions of land, the inhabitants were, in a sense, distributing only opportunities for improvement according to each man's ability. The poor man who employed his talent was rewarded. Those settlers of the wealthier class, who invested their fortunes in the plantation during a period of Indian warfare, received that return which their loyalty merited.

If now these legal inhabitants of the plantation, as the stockholders in a corporation, upon entering into a new estate as an organized town in which new arrivals were to participate, were forced to provide for future divisions of their assets, they could only do so equitably by ascertaining the amount of each man's investment. This was not a difficult problem, and the result would most naturally be expressed in the number of acres to be allotted to each proprietor in every division. This was commonly called a "rule of division." The early settler, who had paid rates from the beginning, would thus have a larger share in the land. This was justly due him. Another settler who had come later might have the same share, because he had paid a larger tax during his residence. A place would be given to every inhabitant, whatever his estate, who had a propriety right in the plantation. This explains the fact that we find among the proprietors of Hartford, and other original plantations, the names of arrivals in every year from 1635 to 1638. We have now to test this explanation of a long-standing mystery by the records.

The reader is reminded that the inhabitants of the plantations had in their Constitution, adopted January 14, 1638–9,

made over to the General Court the right to "dispose of lands vndisposed of." This was not a meaningless phrase. Grants were afterwards made by the Court to various persons, to whom titles can now be traced. On October 10, 1639, authority was given by the Court "to dispose of their owne lands vndisposed of." That act was certainly received by the inhabitants of Hartford as their warrant for subsequent divisions. In 1721, when a dispute arose concerning the ownership of land at Podunk, the town expressly appealed to the settlement of bounds there in 1636, and to this act of 1639, as the authority the inhabitants had for dividing the Three-mile Lots east of the Connecticut River. This was the tract east of the meadow lots. It is stated that it was divided "about the year 1640 . . . to and amongst the then Inhabitants" of the town.[1] The case in question seemed to threaten "dangerous consequences, to the weakening and destroying of all the titles of the proprietors" of the town and other towns in the Colony. This was one occasion for an act confirming titles in 1723.[2]

The months of the winter following the Court's action of 1639, were partly devoted in Hartford, and probably in other river towns, to the settlement of this issue of ownership. This was necessary in clearing the way for contemplated divisions of land. On January 7, 1639–40, all distributions by the inhabitants of the North-side or South-side plantations were made thereafter void. Obviously their former method of plantation divisions was to be supplanted by another, arising out of the whole body of legal inhabitants. They had always acted on the basis of an inhabitant's right of ownership. Such rights could not be set aside, giving to every new resident thereafter a share in the inhabitants' property. The Court did not intend any such action. Hence the question necessarily proposed for the town's consideration was this: Who are the inhabitants that have secured a right in undivided lands, and in what proportion shall they share?

At the annual town meeting, December 23, 1639, William Spencer, William Westwood, John Moody and Nathaniel

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 21, 22.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VI: 394–397.

Ward were chosen townsmen. This meeting probably adjourned to the 26th, when a vote was passed as follows: "Mr [Edward] Hopkins m^{r} [Thomas] wells m^{r} [John] Steele and m^{r} [John] Taylcot are desired to asist vs in exsameing the devsions one either side the River & to rectify the same also to see whoe are Inhabetants to haue proporcons in all devesions & whoe not also to Inquier w^{t} ordrs stand in forse w^{ch} are of genrall Concernm^{t} w^{ch} are not recorded." [1] As this record was made in William Spencer's handwriting, and he was one of the townsmen, the intent of the vote was to add the above inhabitants, two from each side, to the four townsmen, thus constituting a committee of eight to ascertain who were the proprietors of Hartford. The examination of the divisions and accounts of each plantation, probably recorded in the North-side and South-side books, would have disclosed the names of those who had received proportions as inhabitants, and the amount they had paid in rates. These would have been the proprietors. Moreover, they would thus gather the names of those whose grants had been made by free gift. Apparently the committee reported at a meeting of the town, January 3, 1639–40, and their report was adopted as "the rule for division of lands." [2] The share of each was designated by a certain number of acres. With their honorary titles and usual spelling of names, these lists are as follows:

"The Names of such Inhabitants as haue Right in undivided Lands.

John Haynes, Esq., 160; George Wyllys, Esq., 150; Mr. Edward Hopkins, 120; Mr. Mathew Allyn, 110; Mr. Thomas Welles, 100; Mr. John Webster, 96; Mr. William Whiting, 96; John Talcott, 90; Andrew Warner, 84; Mr. Thomas Hooker, 80; William Pantry, 80; William Westwood, 80; James Olmsted, 70; Thomas Hosmer, 60; Nathaniel Ward, 60; William Wadsworth, 52; John White, 50; John Steele, 48; Thomas Scott, 42; Mr. William Goodwin, 42; Thomas Stanley, 42; Mr. Samuel Stone, 40; Stephen Hart, 40; William Spencer, 40; John Moody, 40; William Lewis, 38; William Ruscoe, 32; Timothy Stanley, 32; Jonathan Ince, 30; Richard Webb, 30; William An-

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 10. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 21–24.

drews, 30; Samuel Wakeman, 30; Jeremy Adams, 30; Richard Lyman, 30; William Butler, 28; Thomas Lord, 28; Mathew Marvin, 28; Gregory Wolterton, 28; Andrew Bacon, 28; Richard Goodman, 26; Nathaniel Richards, 26; John Pratt, 26; Thomas Birchwood, 26; George Steele, 26; John Barnard, 24; James Ensign, 24; John Hopkins, 24; Stephen Post, 24; Edward Stebbins, 24; George Grave, 24; John Clarke, 22; William Gibbons, 20; John Crow, 20; Thomas Judd, 20; William Hills, 20; George Stocking, 20; Joseph Mygatt, 20; Nathaniel Ely, 18; Richard Lord, 18; William Hyde, 18; William Kelsey, 16; John Arnold, 16; William Blumfield, 16; Richard Butler, 16; Arthur Smith, 14; Robert Day, 14; John Maynard, 14; Seth Grant, 14; William Hayden, 14; Thomas Spencer, 14; Thomas Stanton, 14; John Baysey, 14; John Wilcox, 13; John Marsh, 12; William Parker, 12; Nicholas Clarke, 12; Thomas Bull, 12; John Higginson, 12; William Holton, 12; Edward Elmer, 12; Francis Andrews, 12; Richard Church, 12; James Cole, 10; Zachary Field, 10; John Skinner, 10; Joseph Easton, 10; Thomas Hale, 10; Richard Olmsted, 10; Samuel Hale, 8; Richard Risley, 8; Thomas Olcott, 8; Robert Bartlett, 8; Thomas Selden, 6; Thomas Root, 6; William Pratt, 6. — Total, 95.

The Names of such Inhabitants as were Granted Lots to have only at the towns courtesy, with liberty to fetch wood and keep swine or cows by proportion on the common.

Thomas Woodford, 6; Ralph Keeler, 6; Thomas Lord, Jun., 6; Thomas Barnes, 6; John Purchas, 6; William Phillips, 6; Nicholas Desborough, 6; Benjamin Burr, 6; Ozias Goodwin, 6; Daniel Garret, 6; John Hall, 6; John Morris, 6; Nathaniel Bearding, 6; John Sable, 6; Richard Watts, 6; William Westley, 6; John Holloway, 5; John Bidwell, 4; Nathaniel Kellogg, 4; Robert Wade, 4; Henry Wakeley, 4; Thomas Upson, 4; Widow Mary Betts, 4; John Bronson, 3; John Olmsted, 3; John Pierce, 3. — Total, 26."

The committee of eight were also authorized to rectify any errors or inequalities in previous divisions. Whether or not they did so is uncertain. There was evidently some dissatisfaction as to the proportions. Our interpretation of the records is that some were found to have more and others

less land than their investment warranted. Perhaps this is the meaning of a vote, not fully deciphered, that was apparently passed January 3, 1639–40, when the committee reported. At all events, on January 14th, the following action was taken: "Whearas their is some differents in m[ens] Alotments some haveing moor then is according to their due proporcon Itis the[refore] orderd That m^{r} Hopkins m^{r} Wells [m^{r}] Webster m^{r} Steele m^{r} Taylcot [Andrew] Warner John Prat Tymothy [Sta]ndly John Clarke Joseph Mygate wth the [towns] men shall Exsamen the same and s[hall] haue power to Appoint Euery man [his] proporcon according as in ther Judg[ment] shalbe Just and Equall And A[ppoint] the places wheer such ffurther [divisions?] of land shallbee layde fforth as [also] Appoint w^{ch} off the Inhabetants [shall have] Equall Right to all vndevided land w^{ch} are onely to take soe much as [they] shall in[rprove?] [faithf?] ully and. . . ." [1] Presumably this committee of fourteen, having full power, reviewed the former lists. It is believed that they first considered the matter of propriety rights and the claims of those who had been put in the town's courtesy list. Their report is thought to be the lists that are found in the records without proportions.[2] The names of the ninety-five proprietors are the same, though arranged in another order. Fifteen names were added, however, to the earlier town's courtesy list. These, with their subsequent proportions, are as follows:

John Warner, 6; William Cornwall, 8; Richard Seymour, 6; Benjamin Munn, 8; John Gennings, 6; Paul Peck, 8; George Hubbard, 6; Thomas Bliss, 6; Thomas Bliss, Jun., 4; Edward Lay, 6; Thomas Gridley, 6; Giles Smith, 8; Thomas Richards, 8; Thomas Bunce, 13; William Watts, 4. — Total, 15.

This committee apparently decided not to alter the proportions already adopted, but to adjust any inequalities, in the distribution of East-side upland lots then in contemplation. This division was ordered January 11, 1640–41. On February 18th, it was decided to run a line east and west through this tract, distributing the land north of it to North-side men, and that south of it to South-side men,

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 14. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 16–20.

excepting a few of the latter, who were to share with the former. North of the line, the grantees were to have one hundred and five acres for one hundred, and south of it, one hundred for one hundred. The same ten inhabitants, with the townsmen, were then authorized to prepare the lists and determine the proportions for this division.[1] We have these reasons, therefore, for assigning to this committee the third set of names recorded in the town votes, according to which proportions the East-side division of 1666 was actually made.[2] In this list, the names are arranged as North-side and South-side residents. Some proportions are greater than those in the rule of division, and others are less. These proportions were used only in the East-side upland division. The proprietors were the same as in the earlier list, excepting that John Cullick had acquired the right of Jonathan Ince, and a lot was sequestered to that of Clement Chaplin. Since the former list, however, seven others had secured a place in the town's courtesy list. Their names and proportions are as follows:

James Wakeley, 4; Samuel Gardner, 4; Thomas Blackley, 4; James Bridgman, 8; John Latimer, 4; Thomas Porter, 4; Richard Billings, 6.

Thus the town perpetuated the acquired rights of the plantation inhabitants in the body of proprietors. If we interpret the records correctly, John Cullick secured by the payment of accumulated taxes the propriety of Jonathan Ince, who did not settle permanently in Hartford. It was given to him July 28, 1640, upon the same condition other lands were given, he "To paye all y^{e} Charges y^{t} is exspeded vpon it y^{e} land: a Just account now given."[3] John Crow, who received Bartholomew Greene's propriety at an early date, doubtless made the same payments. He assumed a proprietor's responsibilities and secured his privileges. Apparently the taxes had been charges made against a propriety. They must have been proportionate to an inhabitant's interest in lands or estate. A careful study of the land records shows that there was a general correspondence between the proportions in their rule of division in

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 39, 42, 46. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 49–55; *Original Distribution*, pp. 492–494.
[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 33, 34.

1639, and the earlier grants that were made by the plantations. We see, moreover, in the later application of this rule, when they assessed a rate upon each man's propriety, to raise funds for the purchase or division of lands, the continuance of the same principle.

As already stated, the early Indian deeds of the West-side lands having disappeared, the ancient proprietors of Hartford secured a confirmation of this purchase in 1670. They then paid the surviving natives "near the value the land was esteemed at before the English came." At a proprietors' meeting, February 9, 1671–2, it was agreed to make a rate of ten pounds upon the proprietors of January 3, 1639, to pay for this purchase, the amount to be raised "upon every man according to his propriety." It was therefore their ancient rule that determined the proprietors' proportions in paying for this land in 1670, as stated in the records.[1] They voted in 1672 to divide a mile and one-half along the town's western bound. The remainder of this tract was to be a "common" forever. The above lots were laid out in November 1674. A committee of the proprietors was appointed in 1677 to distribute the overplus south of the Farmington road among such as had need of the land.

The same principle was applied in the division of the Five-mile tract east of the Connecticut River. This was distributed, however, among another class of owners. As already stated, it had been purchased from Joshua's executors in 1682, by the "inhabitants." This term had assumed its modern meaning under their town government. The money to pay for this tract was raised by a rate assessed upon the town's grand list of that year. The grantees were not the ancient proprietors, but the selectmen of the town. Hence it was divided among the "Inhabitants of the Town" according to what each had paid for the purchase, and the rate of 1682 was recorded as a rule of division. Three miles and one hundred rods next to Bolton, were distributed in 1731. The remainder was held in common until its division in 1753.[2]

[1] *Original Distribution*, pp. 549–552.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I. 201, 202, 205, 252, 284, 309, 310; MS. Vol. II: 360 ff.; *Hartford Land Records*, I, first pages; V, last pages; VII: 476 ff.; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, II: 244–246.

Such was the standing of the ancient proprietors and the proprietors — inhabitants, who made the year 1754 memorable in Hartford by a famous contest over their rights in the division of the West-side town common.[1] The former body was composed of the heirs and assigns of the original proprietors in 1639; the latter embraced the inhabitants, who held the powers and shared the responsibilities of town government in 1682–1685. One made a distribution according to the rule of division adopted in 1639, already used in 1671–1674; the other followed the rule established for the division of the Five-mile tract. The influential majority had allotments in either case. Shares varied, however, according as one owned a propriety or participated as a taxpayer. Some in each class were excluded by the rule of the other. Self-interest probably decided their party allegiance. The fundamental question was one of ownership. Their legal contest involved the interpretation of the town's patent. In the time of Sir Edmund Andros, the General Court, fearing that their rights were in danger, had required each town to take out a patent from the Governor and Company, the grantees under the Charter, and had divided among them the western lands.[2] Such a patent of the land within the town's bounds, was issued May 26, 1685, to Major John Talcott, Samuel Wyllys, Esq., Captain John Allyn, Mr. Richard Lord, Mr. John Haynes, Mr. Thomas Richards, Mr. Cyprian Nichols, Lieut. Joseph Wadsworth, Ensign Nathaniel Stanley, Mr. Stephen Hosmer, and the rest of the proprietors of the town, "sayd parcell of land hauing been by purchafs or otherwise Lawfully obteyned of the Indian Natiue proprietors."[3] Each party considered itself the grantees under this patent. The act of 1723 concerning titles, was supposed to confirm their rights.[4] In 1753, these bodies began their divisions of the

[1] Collections of Conn. Hist. Soc. — "Proprietors' Title to Lands," No. 283; and "Proprietors' Papers," No. 284; *County Court Records*, Vol. T, No. 209; *Superior Court Records*, Vol. XII (1754, 1755); *State Archives: Division of Common, Hartford; Proprietors' Votes*, 1754–1786, City Clerk's Office; "Hartford Proprietors" in *Boardman Collection*, State Library.

[2] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 76–78; Andrews's *The River Towns*, pp. 40, 41.

[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, III: 177, 288; *Colony Record of Deeds*, III: 148, 149.

[4] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VI: 394–397.

common. Subsequent meetings increased the heat of their controversy. Then the matter was taken to the County Court, in the case of Samuel Flagg vs. John Ledyard and William Hooker for the possession of a twenty-acre lot, located on the "First Hill," south of Wadsworth's tavern. The plaintiff represented the claims of the ancient proprietors, having acquired the right of William Westwood. At the trial, in April 1754, he was defeated, but appealed to the Superior Court. There again, the verdict was first sustained. A review was granted, and, in June 1755, the matter received extended consideration. It was such a marshalling of historical evidence as had never before been known, and probably never since. They cited the purchase of 1636, and its confirmation in 1670; the act of the General Court October 10, 1639, authorizing town organization and the distribution of undivided lands; the list of ancient proprietors of 1639; their rule of division as used in 1671; the sequestration of the town common for the perpetual use of the inhabitants; the grant, purchase and division of the Five-mile tract; the town's patent in 1685, and their grants made in town meetings, confirmed by the act of 1723, when the proprietors' rights in the remaining undivided lands were recognized. The jury found that, if the law was such that the purchasers of the said land were vested with the fee thereof, as an estate of inheritance descendible to their heirs and assigns, the verdict should be for the ancient proprietors. The court decided that such was the law, and execution was granted, June 18, 1755, to recover the land with twenty shillings damages and costs of court. Other actions involving this question of ownership, met the same fate as this test case. The parties soon agreed to suspend further controversy, and it is said that the ancient proprietors' rights were purchased by the inhabitants, whose allotments prevailed. Thus after an exciting legal contest, when the shades of the forefathers walked abroad in our courts and legislative halls, and the facts of our early history were marshalled in grand review, the victorious heirs and assigns of the proprietors of 1639, with becoming dignity, made their bow to posterity and passed out of sight.

CHAPTER IX

PLANTATION DIVISIONS

The loss occasioned by the disappearance of the North-side and South-side plantation books, can be repaired in part by the study of the land records. We cannot recover their early votes, the time when some settlers received their house-lots, the dates of various divisions, the special reasons for some grants and certain orders that would have solved perplexities in the town's history. There is no question, however, that the value of the lost books was depreciated in the town's estimation, by the fact that their essential data had been transferred to the town votes and land records. This led, indirectly, to their disappearance. The missing books are supposed to have contained some record of their plantation divisions. When the General Court, in 1639, required the register of each town to "record every man's house and land already graunted and measured out to him," both in the town's book and with the Secretary of the Colony, it virtually ordered each inhabitant to make a return of his plantation allotments. These records are, therefore, a summary of earlier divisions. Unfortunately, some inhabitants delayed their returns. Meanwhile they had bought, sold or exchanged lots; and the ownership of abutting lots had changed. So the names of original grantees, or earlier owners, have in some instances been lost. The plotting of some tracts has been made difficult, if not impossible. Still the town's book of original distribution enables one, on the whole, to follow with reasonable confidence the development of Hartford during the four years of its plantation estate. In doing so, it may be definitely stated that the same general rules as to proportions that prevailed in Springfield and elsewhere were adopted. To each inhabitant, and to some who were not, there were given a house-lot and such a proportion of

meadow, pasture and woodland as was mete for his circumstances. One's estate, social standing, occupation, family, public service, convenience, and ability to improve the land, were considered. As elsewhere, a larger proportion of planting-ground was given to those who were agriculturalists. In distributing meadow and pasture, they regarded those who were engaged in raising cattle and had the means for that venture.[1] As a rule, those who worked at their trades had less land. The principle that governed them in their plantation divisons was to supply the needs of all, in such manner as would further the settlement's development.

There is no doubt that the entries in the *Original Distribution*, under the caption "Febr: Anno dom: 1639," made by the first and second recorders — unknown by name, but acting under John Steele, the official register — comprise the returns made promptly in compliance with the Court's order.[2] These lots, with a few exceptions, were original grants. A lot secured by purchase or exchange is sometimes found among them. The reason for some of these exceptions is known, as in the early sale of Soldiers' Field lots. Presumably such transactions had usually the consent of the inhabitants, as they were contrary to the established rule. On February 18, 1640–41, this vote was passed: "Its ordered y^t euery man y^t hath beene an Inhabitant foure years shall haue power to sell all the Lands that he is possessed of." [3] Perhaps there had been already some sales by inhabitants of four years' standing, but this vote removed the former restriction upon all such settlers. Many lots were then bought and sold. It was a time when each inhabitant could readjust his real estate to his means and circumstances. This accounts for the fact that the record of original grants, made by the first and second recorders, is so often followed by entries, in John Steele's hand, of lots acquired by purchase. It also supports the conclusion that earlier entries were of lots received in their plantation divisions. In certain instances, it is valuable

[1] Burt's *Hist. of Springfield*, I: 158.
[2] See Introduction to *Original Distribution*, by Albert C. Bates.
[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 41. Cf. p. 1.

evidence that the prior owner was an early inhabitant — that is, he must have been an inhabitant four years, or his sale would have been illegal. Now, as the plantations had not been competent to make any new divisions after the adoption of the Constitution, until authorized by the General Court, there are conclusive reasons for the claim that these original grants had been made before January 14, 1638–9, and were, therefore, plantation divisions. In other words, the first and second recorders, so far as returns had been made, entered in the town's book the various divisions of the North-side and South-side plantations. They have thus given us the names that were early applied to these tracts; lists of those who were inhabitants, or had secured an inhabitant's right, probably before these tracts were originally divided; some details as to the manner in which their divisions were conducted; evidence that certain settlers were, for various reasons, regarded with special favor and not a little information as to the topographical features of early Hartford. The order in recording these lots may also indicate, in a general way, their progress in developing the settlement.

In 1640, it was not customary to give detailed descriptions of land. Under each settler's name is a list of his various tracts. His house-lot is first. The general location of his other tracts is usually given as in a section identified by its name. We have also the acreage and abutting owners, or bounds of the four sides. As no measurements are given, the plotting of these tracts is laborious. Sometimes adjoining lots must be followed to a recognizable landmark. The amount of land in any district or division can only be ascertained by collecting all available data concerning it. Upon the total area other conclusions are based, such as the course of bounding highways, long since abandoned. The task is like putting together the fragments of a picture puzzle. Yet it is only by such tedious labor that one can recover an historic representation of early Hartford.

The two plantations must have agreed in 1636 upon the Little River as the boundary between them. Then or later, they ran a line due west from the junction of its two forks. This was the southern bound of Bridgefield, in con-

nection with which it is termed "the deuiding lyne betwene ye South & North side." This line is mentioned in quite recent conveyances. House-lots were the first allotment. These were intended to be about the same in size — "two acres more or less." They were so generally more, that in most sections there proved to be an excess of land.[1] House-lots given by courtesy were usually of smaller extent and were located in the same neighborhood. In the autumn of 1636, all the inhabitants who had then arrived were doubtless provided for. These house-lots have been plotted from the records by William S. Porter, in whose plan of Hartford in 1640 their location may be seen. In the older parts of the town, this plan is equally applicable to the plantations as they were in 1636. The division of other tracts in each plantation was doubtless begun in that year.

Their immediate need of tillable land naturally turned their attention, first, to the Little Meadow, lying between Front Street and the river. It was the only tract on the west side of that river in which the inhabitants of both plantations participated as such, perhaps because the Dutch had the best meadow land on the South-side. They divided it into two sections, one lying north and the other south of the road leading eastward through it, now the lower end of State Street. The northern part contained about thirty-five acres. It was distributed among as many North-side inhabitants, four of the South-side being included with them. The size of the lots varied from thirty perches

[1] These lots were given out by estimate, which proved to be liberal. "In every case where original lines have been determined," says Mr. Washburn, "The amount of land within those lines has been proved to be from fifteen to twenty-five per cent greater than was called for." This may be accounted for by the different chains then in use. Concerning this an old writer on surveying says: "The stationary distance, or merings of ground, are measured either by Gunter's chain of four poles or perches, which consists of 100 links; (and this is the natural division) or by one of 50 links, which contains two poles or perches: but because the length of a perch differs in many places, therefore the length of chains and their respective links will differ also. The English statute perch is 5½ yards, the two-pole chain is 11 yards, and the four-pole one is 22 yards; hence the length of a link in a statute-chain is 7.92 inches. There are other perches used in different parts of England, as the perch of woodland measure, which is 6 yards, that of church-land measure, which is 7 yards, and the forest measure perch which is 8 yards."— *The Theory and Practice of Surveying*, by Robert Gibson, page 145. See also *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 72, 119.

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to about two and a half acres. The highway to the landing ran through this section, and there was a road north and south in the southern part of it. The north bound of this meadow was the two-acre lot originally used for a cow-yard. Here the pioneers probably herded their cattle. On the east was the creek where they were watered. Just north of this lot was the road that crossed the creek by a bridge into the North Meadow, now at the foot of Pleasant Street. Here they maintained the meadow gate. The cow-yard had fallen into disuse before January 11, 1640–41, when the town gave it to Richard Olmsted in exchange for his house-lot, then taken for a burying-ground, now called the "Ancient Cemetery." The fact that this meadow lot was entered among his lands by the second recorder, proves that this scribe did not complete his work until after that date, and presumably John Steele had not succeeded him at the task. This lot was acquired later by Edward Stebbins and descended to his heirs.[1] The southern section of the Little Meadow contained about twenty-seven acres. It was distributed among twenty-three South-side inhabitants. James Olmsted and Mathew Marvin of the North-side also shared with them, perhaps because of a prior occupation. The latter's lot was an acre lying along the Connecticut River, from the division roadway southward to Dutch Point. West of this there was a row of small lots. The others in the western part of this section ran north and south, the larger ones being distributed to Haynes, Hopkins, Wyllys, Welles and Webster. Three acres at the point were then owned by the Dutch. All the participants in this division of the Little Meadow are thought to have had in 1636 an inhabitant's right in one of the plantations, although some of them had not as yet arrived. The indications are that this tract was first used for corn-fields and gardens.

The early settlers discovered at once the value of the North and South meadows, annually fertilized by the spring-time floods. The nearer portions of them were distributed in 1636. Other divisions were not long delayed. The North Meadow, or Long Meadow, extended from the gate

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 40, 41; *Original Distribution*, pp. 107, 190, 254, 255.

at its entrance, northward along the Connecticut River to Windsor. Its western boundary was the "Little River falling out of the North Meadow," and, farther north, the Soldiers' Field, the Neck and the upland. It was distributed exclusively among North-side inhabitants. At first, the southern portion was divided in small lots. All the original grantees are thought to have been legal inhabitants in 1636. Later, there was another division of larger lots. In both cases the allotments ran east and west. As distributed this meadow contained about eight hundred acres. The land records indicate that about two-thirds of it were sufficiently cleared to be described as "meadow." The remainder was a thickly wooded swamp, lying largely along its western side, whence the creek flowed. Parts of it were named the "Dead Swamp." Here and there, other marshy places and pools are mentioned. Trees were then scattered over this meadow, but, if it was ever woodland, large open areas had been cleared by Indian fires for planting fields. The South Meadow offered the inhabitants on that side of the Little River a large proportion of tillable land. It extended from the Great River to the upland, and southward to Wethersfield. The northern portion had a desirable breadth. Some of this land had been already cultivated. Lots here were very convenient, and it is not strange that the settlers crowded the Dutch. They laid out a tier of lots along the Little and Connecticut rivers, from Governor Hopkins's house-lot to the Indian Land, reserving only the site of the House of Hope and the Dutchmen's bouwerie. On the southwest, these lots were bounded by the "Road to the Indian Land." On the other side of this road, large lots were granted to the principal South-side inhabitants. In the meadow, farther south, there were at least four divisions. For these they chose apparently the open areas not occupied by the Indian reservations. There were several forty-acre lots, some of which actually contained considerably more than that amount. After the larger divisions had been made, other tracts, as Porter says, were taken up by "pitches." The records show that several individuals were associated in the ownership of certain tracts. There remained large areas of swamp. Some of these were

gradually cleared and cultivated. Haynes' Swamp became in time Haynes' Meadow, and Ward's Swamp became Ward's Meadow. Great Swamp was the largest, lying along the river near Wethersfield bounds. There were also the Swamp by the Great River, Dead Swamp, Clayboard Swamp, Dry Swamp and Wet Swamp, with "Nod" near at hand. East of the Dead Swamp was the Great Pasture. There was also a Hangdog Pasture. Cole's Island, otherwise called Pennywise Island, Peck's Island or Standish Island, was at Wethersfield bounds. It was involved in the town's boundary disputes. Lots acquired later from the Indian Land are usually so described. More than any section of early Hartford, the South Meadow was altered in extent within a few years. The lots of owners were increased or diminished, from time to time, by the fickle current of the Great River. In the divisions of this meadow, Haynes, Hooker, Stone and Goodwin shared with the South-side inhabitants. It was utilized to a considerable extent in raising cattle. Upwards of five hundred acres were early brought under improvement.

One of the earliest needs of each plantation was pasturage for cattle. Herders drove their cows to pasture in the morning and returned them at night. The North-side residents found a convenient place at the upper end of their settlement. Here they set apart, at an early date, about four hundred acres, and called it the "Cow Pasture." It was bounded on the south by Westfield, Venturers' Field and Pinefield. The northernmost lots in Venturers' Field were those of Thomas Stanley and Richard Goodman, who are named in the records as abutting owners. Probably this tract was laid out before a highway, now Albany Avenue, separated it from this field. The Cow Pasture was bounded as one tract in the entries made by the early recorders, and was held in common for some years. The proportions, however, were known and are recorded. At a later date, the common land on the north, to Windsor bounds, was allotted, and the abutting owners of each lot are given. This tract is also described as in the Cow Pasture. The same is true of the land along Blue Hills, west of the Little Ox Pasture, extending to the river, though

lots there were named later after that locality.[1] At first, this pasture land was heavily wooded. Here the early settlers obtained much of the timber used in their buildings. Thus it was gradually cleared. Some lots have been traced in the deeds from woodland to pasture and then to fenced farm land. Porter estimated this entire tract as containing about one thousand acres.

East of this pasture was the Neck — a name then applied to a narrow strip of land. It extended from Village Street northward, along the hillside slope, to Windsor. On the east was the North Meadow swamp for a long distance. The common fence or road to Windsor was the western bound, separating it from the Cow Pasture, on which earlier allotments abutted.[2] There were two divisions in the Neck among North-side inhabitants. It contained about four hundred acres.

The Little Ox Pasture was west of the original Cow Pasture. It was a tract of about one hundred and sixty acres, divided into nineteen lots, lying on either side of a highway running north and south through it, now Vine Street. The land north of it was then common. South of it was the road leading, in successive stages of development, to the Common, Blue Hills or Simsbury, now Albany Avenue. This pasture was an early division. It seems to have been allotted to certain inhabitants who were omitted in other divisions. All these north end tracts were used at first for pasturage.

We do not know of any cow pasture held in common by South-side inhabitants. They had, however, their Ox Pasture of large extent, which was probably put to such uses. It included the land from the South Meadow on the east, to a north and south line running, says Porter, "on the east side of the burying ground," now on Maple Avenue and called the "South Burying Ground." On the north were their house-lots. At first about four hundred acres were distributed in large lots to the wealthier inhabitants. An-

[1] Blew Hills was a frequent designation in early New England for hills having that color when seen at a distance. The present spelling "Blue Hills" was rare in those times, and became common later through French influence.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 163; *Original Distribution*, pp. 160, 182, 187.

other division later, extended this pasture to the Wethersfield line. The south-east section was sometimes called "Southfield." Through these large lots the path, lane or highway to Wethersfield ran. Poke Hill was west of it in the second division. Much of this tract was marshy land and was partly drained by a brook, which ran south in Hartford and emptied into the Connecticut River in Wethersfield. The Folly Brook channel eastward was cut through in 1726, to further this drainage. The less prominent inhabitants had liberal plantation allotments on both sides of the road, from "George Steele's to the Great Swamp." This highway originally ran along Lafayette Street, curving to the south-east a little north of Park and reaching Washington near Ward Street. West of it was the upland "Forty Acres," a plantation division of small lots made among neighboring residents of the town's courtesy class. On the north was the highway over "Rocky Hill toward the Little River," called later Baker's Lane, now Ward Street. It was an early road to West Hartford. Zion Street led thence to the Stone Pits. There were other divisions south and west of this tract. They extended westward to Rocky Hill and continued southward eventually to Wethersfield line.[1] West of Rocky Hill, four hundred acres were divided in large lots. The Great Swamp contained about the same amount. Much of it is now included in Goodwin Park. The entries of some of these upland lots were made by the second recorder. The division was doubtless made at an early date. At first this region was wooded and wild, but it was rapidly improved. Cedar Mountain was a famous resort for wolves, which made predatory raids upon the settlers' animals. Large holes were excavated, baited and covered with brush to trap them. These were called "wolf pounds," or "wolf pits." Jeremy Adams willed his lot "at the wolfe pound" to his son-in-law, Zachary Sandford. This was near Zachary's Lane, now Vernon Street. Men were employed by the town to hunt these wolves, and a reward was offered for killing them.[2]

Early meadow divisions on the east side of Connecticut

[1] Porter's *Historical Notices*, No. 2, p. 30; *The Hartford Times*, Aug. 8, 1890.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 11, 35, 58, 88, 159, 204; *Original Distribution*, pp. 196, 292, etc.; *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 149, 283, 377, 561.

River were made by both plantations. These were not exclusively to the legal inhabitants. Residents of small means, later arrivals and young men participated. As a rule each plantation divided the land on its side of an east and west line, but there were many exceptions. These lots extended eastward to the Meadow Bank road. The North-side tract was sometimes called Podunk; and Hockanum was the name usually applied to South-side lots. In the latter district large grants were made to the more prominent settlers. This East-side land was used mainly for hay and pasturage. When these early divisions were made, the eastern bound was "upland," a tract held in common by the proprietors of 1639 for many years, as already stated.

It is convenient now to begin at the square and note the divisions westward. The first outlying tract to be appropriated for house-lots was Westfield. Some of these were taken in the early summer of 1636, others in 1637. The name suggests its location — west of the town-plot. Its eastern boundary was Trumbull Street. The highway from Centinel Hill to the Cow Pasture was on the north. This road then continued beyond Tunnel Green toward Belden Street, thence turning westward. A line running southward from that point to the Little River was approximately its western boundary, and afterwards the west bound of the city. Following this line it separated Venturers' Field on the west from a row of five Westfield lots, which abutted east on the road from the Cow Pasture to Mr. Allyn's land, now High Street. Some rods north of Church Street it crossed the road to Venturers' Field or Brick-kiln, running westward. South of this road were the remaining seven lots of the above row, abutting west on the Birck-kiln lot, and then Mr. Allyn's ten-acre swamp lying along Gully Brook. On this lot the railroad station is now located. Westfield was unquestionably a plantation division, but it was not allotted by any rule, being reserved apparently for North-side house-lots.

Venturers' Field was a rectangular tract, through which there ran a north and south roadway from the Cow Pasture to the Swamp, now approximately Edwards Street. On the east side there were four lots, Nathaniel Ely's Brick-kiln

lot completing the tier. On the west side there were eight, the southernmost owned by John Steele being poorer land and nearly twice the size of the others. South of it was William Wadsworth's swamp lot of eight acres. This field contained about forty-one and a half acres, including Ely's lot. It was distributed, as elsewhere stated, to adventurers of 1635.

Pinefield bounded this tract on the west. A roadway followed the ravine westward into it, continuing northwest to the north fork of the Little River, otherwise called Ox Pasture River, West River or Woods River. This road intersected another passing through the tract from the Cow Pasture to the Old Ox Pasture. The north boundary was Albany Avenue. The road from the Mill into the Woods, or into the Country, now Asylum Avenue, was on the south. Its western boundary was an early road about where Sigourney Street now runs. This probably followed an Indian path northward from Rocky Hill, crossing Little River near the upper falls and diverging to the northwest to pass over Woods River near Albany Avenue, or to continue along the ridge of Blue Hills. About seventy acres in Pinefield were divided among twenty-seven North-side settlers, some being of the town's courtesy class. The name was suggested by the pine trees which grew in this section and are mentioned in the records. In more recent times this section has been called "Tower Hill," "Lord's Hill" and "Asylum Hill." The last name is now often applied to the entire west section of the city.

The Middle Ox Pasture extended westward from Pinefield to common land or Woods River. This pasture is bounded as one tract in the record of the original grants, which was made by the second recorder. It appears to have been given in certain proportions to six inhabitants, about 1639, and to have been laid out later. Perhaps it was a special allotment in recognition of some public service. Here William Spencer acquired sixty-three acres before his death, partly under the privilege of exchange.[1]

[1] The original grantees were William Spencer, Dea. Edward Stebbins, William Kelsey, Serg. Thomas Spencer, William Parker and William Ruscoe. The first four lots were acquired by William Spencer, and were on the west side of the tract.

The remaining North-side woodland, east of the north fork of the Little River, was included in the Old Ox Pasture. On the north was the road from the Mill into the Country, and the tract extended southward to the river. This was a plantation division made, it is believed, in 1638 or 1639. The participants were the more prominent North-side inhabitants, and their lots were large. Seventy-two acres along its southern side and east of the cross-road near Sigourney Street, were granted in one tract to Governor John Haynes, Rev. Samuel Stone and Rev. Thomas Hooker. Their respective shares, as laid out, were forty, twelve and twenty acres. The Hartford Public High School is on Governor Haynes's lot. Much of Mr. Hooker's is now included in the Dixon place. The rest of this ox pasture is also bounded in the records as one tract, the individual proportions being given. Probably the lots had not been laid out when the second recorder made his entries. A few recorded later name the abutting owners. There were about twenty original grantees who thus divided nearly five hundred acres. The lots west of Sigourney Street ran east and west. Mathew Allyn's was the largest and contained sixty-four acres. Other original owners were Wadsworth, Chaplin, Talcott, Pantry, James Olmsted, Westwood, Steele, Marvin, Scott, Lewis, Hart, William Goodwin, Thomas Stanley, Goodman, Richards, Webb and Grant. Their proportions were in the order named. The lots at the southern end of this tract, amounting to one hundred acres, were acquired by Rev. Joseph Haynes and constituted the "Nook Farm." It descended to his son John Haynes and, at his decease in 1713, it was described as "in the Nook of the River." Its value was then £100. Other lands located in the bends of rivers bore this name. There was a "nook" farther north, on Woods River.

The division and development of the land west of the two forks of the Little River were materially affected by the course of the highways leading thither. The earliest communication with Farmington was by the Old Farmington

In 1684 William Edwards, who had married widow Agnes Spencer, conveyed this tract to Thomas Lord (*Land Rec.*, 1: 84). William Parker's six acres and William Ruscoe's fifteen acres were sold in 1684 to Joseph Collier (*Orig. Dist.*, p. 339).

Road along Retreat and New Britain avenues. This road passed through the southern section of the Town Common. North of it was Baker's Road, over Rocky Hill, which crossed Hog River near Hamilton or Park Street, and ran through the Common to John Seymour's, or Major's Corner. This was an early highway to the West Division and was sometimes called the Middle Road to Farmington. Farther north, was Gurney's Road. This was originally projected as an extension of the road from the Mill into the Country, to reach the Common. In 1686, Joseph Wadsworth conveyed land to the town for that purpose, receiving in exchange a tract on Simsbury Road.[1] This extension was accomplished later, through John Gurney's land to the river. The bridge was known as Gurney's Bridge. In 1754, this highway was laid out from the river to Prospect Avenue. The same year a road from Wadsworth's, over the "First Hill" southward, was opened. This route to West Hartford was by Gurney's Road, along the above road southward to Fern Street, where it turned westward. Still farther north, was the Simsbury Road already mentioned. It crossed the Little River at the Sheep's Bridge. The part just beyond, which passed the Wadsworth homestead, was sometimes called "Wadsworth's Road." It was also known as the "Old North Road." In 1798, the General Assembly laid it out as Talcott Mountain Turnpike. Nearer the Windsor bounds there was another road. It was projected in 1727, and was to run from the northeast corner of John Pantry's lot on Blue Hills, westward to "Cole Pitt Plain," then across Pantry's Brook, where there was a bridge, and so to continue to the place where Nathaniel Jones first began to make a dam.[2] In 1754 it was laid out through the Common. It was little used and was finally discontinued. This road is now the western portion of Tower Avenue.

There was probably in earliest times a cartway from the

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 73; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 259, 263, 265, 275, 283, 291, 319; MS. Vol. II: 91; *State Archives: Towns and Lands*, II: 79–84.

[2] Nathaniel Jones married in 1713 Rebecca Pantry. They were the parents of Pantry Jones. In 1719 the town gave Nathaniel Jones liberty to erect a fulling mill on West River, and he was to hold the land while he had a mill there. Apparently he abandoned his first intent. This road can now be easily traced to the river, and the shoulder of Jones's dam remains, near a large oak tree.

Old Ox Pasture gate through the woods into the southern section of the pasture. A highway to Haynes' Nook is mentioned in 1755. At the beginning of the last century, there arose a demand for a direct road to West Hartford. The General Assembly, therefore, in 1801 laid out Asylum Street through lands then undeveloped, as a part of the Farmington Turnpike Road. Thus Farmington Avenue, from the junction westward, was established through the Old Ox Pasture.[1] It passed through Mathew Allyn's original lot. Part of this was acquired in 1818 by Joseph Morgan, when he bought his farm on the north side of this road. His farm-house stood on the elevation called in early times "Ox Pasture Hill," near the site of the Cathedral.

All undivided lands in early times were called "commons." This term was applied to various tracts in Hartford. One of these was concretely named the "Town Common." On January 30, 1672–3, the proprietors, who had recently acquired by repurchase from the Indians a new title to the lands west of those already divided, voted to distribute a mile and a half of the west end the whole length of the town's bounds. This was the West Division. The Mountain Road was its west line. It was divided among the proprietors according to the rule of 1639, in which proportion they had been assessed for the recent purchase. They also voted that the remainder, next to the lots already laid out, "Shall be & remayn a common foreuer for the ufe & benifitt of the Inhabitants of Hartford." [2] This tract was west of the forks of the Little River, and east of the one and a half mile tract. Its western bound was near Quaker Lane. On the north it extended to Windsor, and, on the south, to Wethersfield, now Newington. The only land in this Common that had been already granted was Bridgefield. It was a rectangular tract bounded south on the dividing line between the two plantations, and east on the Little River. The sides were two hundred rods east and west, and two hundred and twenty-eight rods north and south. It contained two

[1] See articles on Asylum Street and Farmington Avenue in *The Hartford Times*, April 15, May 6, 1890, May 8, 1907, and March 9, 1909; and in *The Hartford Courant*, May 21, 1887.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 253, 254; MS. Vol. II: 54; *Original Distribution*, pp. 551, 555.

hundred and eighty-five acres. Farmington Avenue now divides this ancient field. In the records, it is bounded as one tract. The earliest entries were made by John Steele, indicating that it was not a plantation division. It was laid out in 1697.[1] Among the original grantees were Haynes, Hooker, Goodwin, John Allyn, Talcott, Stebbins, Wadsworth, Goodman and Lewis. The names of some are unknown. The John Knowles farm was in this field and partly made up of Governor Haynes's lot. The development of Bridgefield had been carried on many years before the common land about it was divided. In its general character, the Common was woodland. It remained such for many years. All the trees of the forest grew there. The town frequently found it necessary to restrain the slaughter of them.[2] Here and there, gigantic oaks are now standing that escaped because they defied the woodsman's ax. This Common was not altogether without activities. In 1732, some acres of Pine Tree Hill were fenced for a sheep pasture. It was land that Daniel Clark asked liberty to improve in 1699. Pine Hill, probably in the same neighborhood, was a tract bounded on the west, north and east by West River.[3] In 1741, John Seymour Jr. leased from the town land in the Common for tanvats. The name "Stone Pit Hill" was applied to a tract bounded east, south and west by Woods River, and north by Simsbury Road.[4] Here Timothy Andrews and Nehemiah Cadwell received liberty to set up a sawmill, in 1744. Presumably it was the same location granted, in 1697, to Jonathan Ashley and John Marsh. At the south end of the Common, near Piper's River, there was another sheep pasture, probably for the South-side inhabitants. At various times, the entire tract was put to such uses. After about seventy-five years, however, its career as a Common came to an end.[5] It had been encroached upon from the west. The rest of the land was wanted for farm use. Its original projectors were dead.

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 249, 254; *Original Distribution*, pp. 554, 555.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 220, 221, 271, 312, 321, 322; MS. Vol. II: 20.

[3] *Hartford Land Records*, 3: 306; 5: 616; 7: 99; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 256, 259; MS. Vol. II: 80, 114.

[4] *Hartford Land Records*, 20: 633; 28: 510; 44: 285.

[5] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 4; *The Hartford Times*, June 5, 1893.

Still the "heirs and assigns" of the proprietors of 1639 were alive and they owned it. At least the Court so decided, after a memorable contest, as elsewhere related. In 1754, the old Town Common was laid out in thirty-three tiers of lots, and the tract was thus divided among the inhabitants as preserved in the records. The list of participants furnishes a valuable census of Hartford residents at that time.[1]

The division of Soldiers' Field has been reserved for special consideration, as it is generally admitted that the original grantees of its lots were Hartford's soldiers in the Pequot War. This tract extended from the road to the North Meadow, now Pleasant Street, northward to the swamp, and had the creek on the east. Its western bound going north, was, in turn, the first Neck road, the swamp, William Cornwall's lot and the Neck. There was an early path or lane through it, from Mr. Allyn's house to the creek. This was allowed to him, probably when the lots were distributed. South of it there were three one-rood lots. The narrowest part of the tract was at its southern end. Its width varied farther north. Porter reckoned the area of this field as about fifteen acres. The calculations of Mr. Francis H. Parker, based upon later ownership, make it twenty-eight acres.[2] About one-half of its lots are recorded as containing one rood. These were doubtless original allotments. When the entries were made several had two or three roods, and there were two four-acre lots. The names of the twenty-nine owners recovered by Mr. Parker, beginning at the north end, are as follows: Edward Elmer, John Peirce, John Holloway, Nicholas Desborough, Benjamin Munn, Nicholas Gennings, John Warner, John Purchase, Thomas Root, William Pratt, Sergeant William Cornwall, Richard Goodman, Zachary Field, Thomas Munson, Thomas Barnes, William Phillips, Samuel Hale, Thomas Hale, Sergeant Thomas Spencer, Stephen Hart, John Bronson, William Hayden, Thomas Olcott, Richard Olmsted, William Blumfield, Jonathan Ince, George Steele, Nicholas Clarke

[1] "Records of Hartford Town Common" in the State Library; "Town Common Papers," in the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society; *Hartford Land Records*, 8: last pages.

[2] "The Soldiers' Field and its Original Proprietors," by Francis H. Parker, MS. in collections of the Connecticut Historical Society.

and John Clarke. It is known, however, that other Hartford settlers served in the Pequot War, whose names are not found in this list.[1] Several additional soldiers are mentioned in narratives of the war. These are Rev. Samuel Stone, Thomas Bull, Philip Davis, Nicholas Olmsted, Arthur Smith and Thomas Stanton. The Colony also granted land to others for such service. If all the following received their grants for this reason, as some did, their names should be added to the list: Peter Blachford (*Col. Rec.*, II: 161), Thomas Blatchley or Blakesley (*Col. Rec.*, II: 133), Thomas Bunce (*Col. Rec.*, II: 154), John Hall (*Col. Rec.*, IV: 276), John Hills (*Col. Rec.*, II: 161), Thomas Hurlbut (*Col. Rec.*, II: 161; V: 379), William Parker (*Col. Rec.*, II: 196), John Stone (*Col. Rec.*, II: 100), Henry Walkley (*Col. Rec.*, II: 112), and Samuel Whitehead (*Col. Rec.*, II: 150). The Colonial Records also confirm the claims of twelve, who had grants in Soldiers' Field. Various authorities, presumably on good evidence, have added to these the names of Benjamin Burr, Captain John Cullick, Robert Sanford and John Stanley. In the three levies of the Pequot War, Hartford was called upon for sixty-one soldiers. We have in the above lists the names of forty-nine, and twelve are missing. Thomas Gridley and Edward Lay are said to have enlisted from other towns, but being later in Hartford, they may have been recognized here as soldiers, by the town's bounty.

It is obvious that Soldiers' Field was not distributed before 1637. Reasons are given elsewhere for the opinion that this tract was the site of the Indian village, and was surrendered to the English after the war, probably for the benefit of the soldiers. While the majority in the above lists were afterwards proprietors, a considerable number obtained their privileges by the town's courtesy. Most of these are believed to have been recent arrivals when war was declared. Some were young men, and perhaps had emigrated in the service of older planters. It is noticeable and significant, however, that only nine or ten of the lists can be classed as South-side residents. That plantation would certainly have furnished more than ten soldiers in

[1] See *Connecticut Soldiers in the Pequot War of 1637*, by James Shepard.

the Pequot War. We conjecture, therefore, that the missing men were of the South-side, who had less use for Soldiers' Field lots, and that they had at once sold their rights to North-side soldiers, in whose proportions they are included. To the latter, such lots were very valuable, especially for garden use. John Bronson, William Hayden, and others who lived near, may have thus acquired their larger proportions. Soldiers' Field was of sufficient extent to have provided a one-rood lot as a bounty for all of Hartford's soldiers, with a larger grant to any who were officers or had rendered special service.

The possession of these meadow lots, however, would not have been the first consideration to any late arrivals or young men of this victorious army. They needed, and would have desired above all else, house-lots — that primary grant of a plantation, which invited and established their residence. The principle and practice of the inhabitants in their divisions are strongly opposed to any gift of meadow lots without a prior assignment of house-lots. Their probable order of action was, that each plantation granted house-lots to its soldiers, who were not already provided for, and then the recently vacated meadow was divided by a committee among all their soldiers. Let us look for these house-lots. On the north side of the road from Centinel Hill to the Cow Pasture, now North Main Street, there was a row of such lots. Most of them were one-half acre in size. The original owners going west were John Holloway, Thomas Spencer, Thomas Fisher, Zachary Field, Thomas Root, Benjamin Munn, Samuel Hale, Benjamin Burr, John Warner, William Pratt, Nicholas Gennings, John Peirce, Daniel Garrad, Nicholas Desborough and Richard Seymour. All of these names are found in the above list of soldiers, excepting Thomas Fisher, Daniel Garrad and Richard Seymour. In 1640, the town gave Nicholas Gennings's lot in Soldiers' Field to Daniel Garrad. The house-lots of Thomas Fisher and John Peirce had been sequestered for them, but neither was sufficiently prominent to deserve a reservation as a proprietor.[1] The latter surrendered his and settled on the south side of the Little River. Across

[1] *Original Distribution*, pp. 152, 157.

the road from this row of house-lots, were those of Thomas Barnes, Thomas Munson, William Phillips, John Purchase and Thomas Hale — all of them soldiers. John Bronson, Sergeant William Cornwall and William Hayden lived just below the hill on the east. Was there also a distribution of such house-lots in the South-side Plantation? Along the road from George Steele's to the Great Swamp, now Lafayette Street, we find another row of house-lots, probably allotted in 1637 or 1638. Most of these also contained one-half acre. Their original owners going south were William Holton, Paul Peck, Henry Walkley, Richard Watts, William Watts, William Westley, Edward Lay, John Olmsted, John Peirce, Richard Risley and George Steele. This row overlapped, and Thomas Selden, Thomas Bliss, Sen., and Thomas Bliss, Jr., had one-half acre lots in the rear. Across the lane northward was the house-lot of Thomas Bunce, and below the hill, was that of William Blumfield. The names of six of these grantees are found in the above list of soldiers. Captain Thomas Watts, the renowned Indian fighter of 1675, was a son of Richard and younger brother of William Watts. Dr. John Olmsted was a surgeon in that service. Several of this group removed at an early date to other plantations. Others died before 1670. Thomas Selden forfeited his lot, but in 1640 the townsmen were authorized to make him an allowance for his improvements.[1] Edward Lay had also then forfeited his, by neglect to build upon it, but the town offered to restore it upon the same conditions. Only five of the entire number were alive, when the Colony made its grants of land for service in the Pequot War, and Thomas Bunce and Paul Peck were the only residents of Hartford.

These are the facts disclosed in an unprejudiced study of the land records. They do not constitute historical evidence upon which to base an affirmation, that all the original owners of these two groups of house-lots did military service in 1637. In the author's opinion, however, they make such a conclusion seem quite probable. They at least furnish thirteen new names for consideration. The missing soldiers of the South-side quota should be sought among

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 42.

the same class of inhabitants that furnished the majority from the North-side. For an expedition into the enemy's country, younger men and recent arrivals could better be spared from the defenders of both plantations, which might be assaulted at any moment. After this little army returned victorious beyond all expectations, the inhabitants of Hartford could do nothing less than receive their heroes as residents of their plantations, and enroll their names at least among the recipients of the town's courtesy, of which class the soldiers in the Pequot War constitute a large proportion.

CHAPTER X

GROWTH OF THE TOWN

We invite the reader's company in the early springtime of 1640, as we stand together on the brow of Ox Pasture Hill and look toward the rising sun, that we may view the growing settlement of the proprietors of Hartford. All the sights one sees to-day from the broad avenue that climbs this hill westward, must be forgotten — the Capitol, the park, the railroad, the high buildings and the teeming thoroughfare. We are at the pasture gate, on the western border of a pioneer settlement. The woodland is behind us. A cartway, passing by a rude bridge over Brick-kiln Brook and winding northward, leads up the partly cleared hillside to our feet. A panorama is within our view, extending from the present Tunnel Park to the South Green. Four years before, this tract was clothed with the forest. An army of woodsmen has marched through it. Their axes have left many scattered survivors, but everywhere we see the logs and stumps that witness to their slaughter. A limpid stream is visible on the south, flowing from the woodland. Overhanging bushes border its banks. It encircles two or three islands in the lowland and, beyond, tumbles over a fall and disappears from view. The land we see is rough and hilly. To the right beyond the stream, is a hill — now crowned with marble, which rises in stately proportions to a gilded dome. Another hill, of conical shape, is in the distance on the left, where, perhaps, we descry a sentinel's lookout. In places, there are pools of water, or patches of marsh grass. Just at the base of the hill, where we stand, is a swamp, some acres in extent. It borders a brook that flows down a gully from the northwest. Through the leafless trees we can see, here and there, newly built log-houses, and a few more pretentious. Some are in process of erection. About them are plain out-buildings,

strongly framed of unhewn logs, with fenced yards convenient for use, and gardens whose fertile soil hungers for the tillage of civilization. In such a manner had these settlers been accustomed to group the buildings that housed their possessions in old England — even as the traveller sees them to this day. At the eastern limit of our view, these pioneer homes, separated by liberal intervals, seem to have ranged themselves in a row from north to south, with flanking rows from east to west, disclosing the location of their main highways. Still farther east, down the slope, is a parallel roadway. Its homes face a meadow, and beyond is a great river. The stream that flows eastward divides this settlement into two plantations. In some measure, these topographical features directed the course of their growth.

The area we have thus described, was largely the scene of Hartford's development west of the river for about two centuries, excepting only that of the agricultural interests in the suburbs. Of this settlement in 1638, DeVries wrote, it has "a fine church and a hundred houses." An examination of the entries of houses, made in the records in 1640, shows that there were then at least sixty-three on the North-side and fifty-three on the South-side, or one hundred and sixteen in all. Some of the young men, or recent arrivals, then recorded only "a parcel for a house lot." Many of these houses were small habitations of the poorer settlers. In 1654 the rateable persons in this pioneer community were only 177. Decades passed and added little to its population. A census was made by the selectmen in 1761. It shows the increase of one hundred and twenty-five years. There were then only 156 families on the North-side, or 868 whites and 68 blacks. On the South-side there were 720 whites and 41 blacks. East of the river the population was 1588, and, in the West Division, 653. Thus the total of the town's inhabitants was only 3938.[1] This was a few hundred larger than the present population of Suffield, which town may suffice to picture Hartford in 1761. Its list of estates that year was £39826 11s. 6d. There were nine towns in the Colony that exceeded this.

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XI: 574 n.

View of Hartford from the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, 1849

The census of 1756 gives Hartford a population of 3027. This was surpassed by Windsor and Farmington. In 1774 the population had increased to 5031, and, in 1782, to 5495.[1] The year before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, the males in Hartford, from twenty to seventy years of age inclusive, were 1022. In 1790, when Hartford was a newly incorporated city, its population was 4090. Even so recently as 1830, when nearing its bicentennial, its appearance was that of a country town, with 9789 inhabitants. An enumeration of its houses in 1786 gave the North-side 190, and the South-side 60, which was fifty less than President Ezra Stiles estimated were in the town.[2]

The deductions from such facts are obvious. Our study is concerned with a rural community. Compared with modern times, the changes were few in the course of years. Time slipped along and men were born, lived and died, without witnessing any such alterations as every decade now brings. Public improvements were forced by necessity, rather than popular favor or artistic taste. No new vehicle was invented that involved a revolution in the customs of travel. The town's roads were repaired from time to time, but the rider on horseback, and the farmer's cart, followed the familiar trail of red mud for generations. Indeed, about 1830 Mr. G. W. Kappell published a humorous paper in Hartford, in which he narrated the experience of a citizen who went to a hat lying in the street north of the State House. He found a man under it. When he asked if help was needed, the man replied: "No, I have a good horse under me, and I guess I can get through." In colonial times there was no demand for anything better than the old dirt road. Grass grew along it, where the sheep and cattle browsed on their way to pasture. The survivors of the primeval forest, such as the Charter Oak, disappeared one by one. Young trees were set out, or allowed to grow up along the highways and about their homes. They came to large proportions, but sometimes the descendants of those who planted them still occupied the old homestead. The first century saw no conspicious changes in the simple architecture of their buildings. As a settler's means in-

[1] *Ibid.*, XIV: 485. [2] *Diary of Ezra Stiles*, III: 237, 266.

creased, and saw-mills prepared abundant material, the pioneer's log cabin gave place to a framed house. It was many years before some of the original house-lots were divided up, and the early groups of buildings were scattered. Yet, little by little, the settlement of the founders was transformed. The disorder of wilderness life disappeared. Fields were cleared and seeded down. Stumps went to decay. Hillocks were leveled. Swales were filled up. Fences set bounds to their highways, and the trees spread over them arches of shade. Such was the town in which we are interested. To recover it from those early times, the imagination must rebuild it, using such materials as the ancient records furnish.

The early years of the settlers were chiefly devoted to two spheres of labor, in the course of which the town was developed without any special plan. These involved widespread activities. The first was their building operations. There were masons, carpenters and men of other trades in the town, but most of this work was done by the settlers themselves, with such supervision or assistance. Those well built houses that have survived to recent times were exceptions rather than the rule. One hundred houses of the simplest type involved a deal of labor. If we compute the number of trees required to erect them, with their outbuildings and fences, we can readily understand how the settlers would have cut off most of the available timber within the town-plot before 1640. At first they dug "saw-pits" where the trees had been felled. Over these they rolled the logs. The familiar "whip-saw" was used, a "top-man" working it from above and a "pit-man" from below. Thus they prepared their timbers, planks and boards. Their progress in erecting buildings may be inferred from the fact that, on January 7, 1639–40, such pits as were on public land, or not in use, were ordered to be filled up, and all pits were to be protected by pales. The regulations passed by the town the previous month indicate that the settlers were even then seeking timber outside of their limits on common land, and that they were "cleaving and squaring" such timbers for the construction of better buildings than they had at first.

Stones were in demand for underpinning and chimneys. Their earliest supply was sought at the "falls" of the riveret, near Thomas Lord's house-lot. It is only recently that the removal of Daniels's dam disclosed signs of quarrying, which was probably done there in those times. One of their early orders, probably passed in 1637, forbade it longer. They then opened a quarry at the lower falls, where there is a ledge of red sandstone. It runs northwest underneath the municipal building, in erecting which much of it was excavated and placed along the banks of Park River. Specimens of these early building stones are sometimes seen in old cellar walls, for, like oak timbers, they often passed from an early building to its successor. Later they took their stone from Rocky Hill.

Bricks soon came into general use. The brick-kiln was established as early as 1637, in the hillside north of the railway station. Clay was found there or in the neighborhood, and the brook furnished a convenient supply of water. Probably each settler made his own bricks. If otherwise, the brickmaker's name is unknown. The kiln was sufficiently patronized to demand a road thither. It is believed to have been in operation for many years. In 1685, the town granted Evan Davy liberty to make a brickyard in the highway near Stephen Hopkins's lot, southwest of the Capitol. Perhaps he had made bricks in that neighborhood earlier, as he bought land there in 1681. A brickyard was conducted in 1702 by Wilterton Merrill, James Easton and Richard Seymour. These bricks were of various sizes from the first. The reason may have been that they were put to different uses. Some were square and flat, as if for paving floors or walks. Larger sizes would be more suitable for chimneys; the smaller for filling in between the studs of a house wall. An old brick, bearing the date 1672, and supposed to have been in the chimney of the first Prior house in East Windsor, is 7 inches long, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick. In the Richards house, the bricks were 8 inches long, 4 inches wide and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, though the width and thickness were sometimes less. Those in the Dorus Barnard house were $8\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, 4 inches wide and $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches thick. The Morrison house

contains bricks of various sizes, probably because of its rebuilt masonry. In 1685, the General Court, noting the fact that there was a "variety of sizes used in the makeing of bricks," ordered that "the length of all bricks shall be nine inches and their bredth fower inches and a halfe and that they be two inches and a halfe thick." [1] An act was passed in 1770, making the size 8 inches long, 4 inches wide and 2 inches thick. It was quite common for an early brickmaker to put a date on one of his bricks, especially when he made a quantity for some particular building. Early handmade bricks can be found with the finger-prints of the maker upon them. Yet these bricks, being laid in clay and easily cleaned, frequently passed from one structure to another, so that the date does not always give the correct age of an edifice. Bricks of a later date were also used in repairs. It is an error to suppose that bricks were brought in any large quantity from England.

The second sphere of their early labors was agriculture. There is ample evidence in the records that these were arduous. Other than Indian corn, they had little grain to consume for several years. Their limited supply of English wheat, rye and peas was needed for seed. The natives furnished much of their corn. At times this was scarce. In 1638, the price was 5s. per bushel. It was reduced to 3s. in 1641, and the next year to 2s. 6d., which was the standard of value for several years. Wheat was then 4s. 4d. per bushel; rye and peas 3s. 6d. Grain was largely their medium of exchange, so they planted their fields with hard cash. As an example of the average planter, we may cite Richard Lyman's estate. He had suffered in the loss of cattle at the time of his removal. When he died in 1641, his herd numbered four, besides three goats and eight hogs. His inventory also shows that he had planted that year five acres of Indian corn, three roods of peas and barley, and an acre each of summer wheat, oats and meslin — a mixture of wheat and rye. Presumably this shows the progress of his agricultural labors after five years. James Olmsted, who died in 1640, had besides three horses, a herd of thirteen, the same number of swine and four goats. Of

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, III: 192.

Indian corn he had 160 bushels, 30 of summer wheat and 12 of peas. William Wadsworth was a prosperous farmer of early times. At his death in 1675, he had 11 cows, 1 bull, 4 yoke of bullocks, 10 young cattle, 7 calves, 13 hogs, 4 young swine, 5 horses, 3 colts and a mare with her colt. The raising of sheep increased in later colonial times. In 1671, the town ordered certain highways, then to be staked out, "to bee Cleered for sheepe pasture." A shepherd was in charge of the flock. Complaint was made in 1774, that the sheep turned into the highways ate up the grass used by the poor inhabitants.[1] At this time, Hartford was a thriving agricultural community. A visitor in 1788 says, "It is a confiderable rural town; the greater part of the inhabitants live by agriculture; fo that eafe and abundance univerfally reign in it." He also speaks of the "vaft meadows covered with herds of cattle of an enormous size." [2] During early years, the fields fit for cultivation were limited. They had a large amount of provender to provide for their cattle in winter. Many buildings were required for shelter. This was surely an arduous task for the hardiest English yeoman. The town's orders show, also, that they needed many fences. Their yards and gardens were enclosed with paling. This was made of stakes driven into the earth, and fastened to one or more horizontal rails. Pales were from three to six feet in length, according to their use. They also fenced their cornfields and meadows, often to no purpose, as frequent suits for damages prove. On the side toward the town they fenced their pastures. Swine soon became numerous in the settlement. They were a necessity, but the forefathers were almost plagued to death by them. As they were then given the freedom of common lands at times, they naturally became wild. They broke down the fences, and the settlers suffered extensive damages.

If now we can imagine the inhabitants of this settlement as busy as bees for some years in these employments, we shall see how naturally the town grew. Their earliest highways were not laid out by the town. They were de-

[1] *Ibid.*, XIV: 216.
[2] *New Travels in America*, by J. P. Brissot de Warville, pp. 72, 73.

termined by the topography of the land and the activities of the inhabitants. After their house-lots were located, the town soon found out where the people wanted to go. It made there a highway, the lines of which were established in due time. The way a settler found most convenient in reaching his employment was followed by others, until it became a road. To the woods he went for his timber; to the falls for stone; to the kiln for clay or brick; to the meadow for hay; to the pasture with his cows; to the mill with his corn; to the mouth of the meadow creek for his boat to cross the river, and to Windsor or Wethersfield to see his friends. Others did the same. Soon roads were made, which survive to this day as the city's streets. It is significant that no highways now cross Main Street east and west. The eastern portion of Pearl Street was laid out where it is, because it was a convenient route to the mill. The same is true of all early highways. Hence their roads came to be named according to their destination, or the places and residences that were thus connected. Sometimes these occur in reverse order in the records. The road from the Meeting House to the Mill was through Pearl, Trumbull, Jewell and Ford streets. It was also named "Town to the Mill" and "Old Mill to the Meeting House." The eastern end was sometimes designated as "Seth Grant's to the Meeting House." The extension farther west had destinations according to the development of the settlement — "to the Ox Pasture," "to the Country," "to the Middle Ox Pasture," "to the Woods," "to the Little River" and "to the Commons." After the new mill had been erected at the falls, the road from it westward also received the ambiguous designation "Mill to the Ox Pasture." Centinel Hill was another place of departure for highways. They ran thence "to the Cow Pasture," "to the Neck," "to the North Meadow" and "to Seth Grant's." The latter was usually named "Seth Grant's to Centinel Hill," now Trumbull Street, from Pearl northward. In time, Centinel Hill came to be called "Pound Hill," and the names changed accordingly. The entire length of this highway was named "Little River to Centinel Hill," or, "Thomas Stanton's to Centinel Hill." John

Steele lived where the Travelers Insurance Company building is. When he recorded his lot, he bounded it on the west by "the hyway Leading from the olld Palifado Now frō the mell to the meeting houfe." As the bridge became a conspicuous landmark, this street received the names "Bridge to the Meeting House," or "Bridge to Pound Hill." Another place of departure was George Steele's house, at the corner of Washington Street and Capitol Avenue. Hence we have the name, "George Steele's to the Mill," applied to the road along Trinity Street, turning then north-west around Capitol Hill to the site of the upper mills. The road from his house southeast joined Buckingham Street near the South Church and continued eastward. It was the highway from "George Steele's to the South Meadow." The section east of Main Street was also named "Giles Smith's to William Gibbons'." The road from "George Steele's to the Great Swamp" led through Lafayette Street, joining Washington Street farther south. One of their longest highways started at the upper mills and went eastward through Elm and Sheldon streets. There was a similar road along the north side of the Little River, now Arch and Wells streets. That portion of Main Street south of the river was called the "Road to Wethersfield" and the "Road to the Ox Pasture." The town, bridge or river, were sometimes its place of departure, and southward from Buckingham Street, the home of John Moody. There is, indeed, scarcely a highway that had not several names applied to it during early years. These continued in use for a long time in the land records. Probably in conversation all roads were designated according to their destination. In the course of time, however, the town's streets came to be named after some feature or the location. It was convenient to speak of "the broad hyway." So their principal thoroughfare became "Broad Street," just as, at a later time, "the main street" became "Main Street." Trumbull Street was at first called "the back street," and then "Back Street." Other town streets were conveniently spoken of as the road that passed the home of some well-known resident. This was a natural origin of the custom of naming streets after certain citizens. As the town-plot

became more clearly defined, highways were said to lead from the town to some suburban place or neighboring town. In 1679, the General Court ordered that roads from plantation to plantation "shall be reputed the country roades or King's highway." [1] For this reason, probably, the road from the Meeting House to the Little Meadow came to be named "King Street." Main Street north of the square was then called "Queen Street." The cart tracks in these ancient highways were not necessarily straight for any considerable distance. The land reserved for them was of liberal width, and the roadway might be made in any part of them according to the driver's convenience.

The growth of a town is usually revealed in the condition of its highways. Imagine the appearance of Main Street as it must have been in 1640 — a wide swath that the ax had cut through the forest, with a road finding its way from end to end, over swales and around stumps. The improvement of such roads was an early public service. In 1640 it was ordered that every man fit for service should work on them one day, magistrates and church officers excepted. The two highway surveyors were empowered, in 1641, to call out the train-bands and teams for two days; and he who refused to respond was to be reported to the Particular Court. Two years later another call was made, to work on the highway from the bridge to the meeting-house, "vntell the worck be finished." That year, also, the eight residents on the north bank of the Little River were freed from common work on the roads, on condition that within that time they made our present Wells Street "pasabell with loden carttes," at their own charges. It was years before the settlers realized how much work was necessary on their highways. They then vested in the townsmen extraordinary powers to compel such public service. In 1760 the General Assembly granted the privilege of a lottery to raise £300, "for the repairing the main streets in the town of Hartford." [2]

One of their early public works was the construction of causeways. These were paths made of stones, logs and earth,

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, III: 30. [2] *Ibid.*, XI: 411.

raised above the natural level of the highway, to afford a dry passage for the feet. In England they were then in general use. The earliest was constructed in Hartford in 1644. It was along Main Street, for it is described as leading "to the metting hous and vp the lane to the pound by tho Spenser." The pound was west, and Thomas Spencer's house north of Centinel Hill. Probably others were soon built, for, in 1646, it was forbidden, under penalty of six pence, to ride a horse on any causeway that led to the meeting-house, except to cross it. Two years later, the driving of cattle or carts upon any of the "Causyes that Lead from any parte of the Towne to the meeting howse" was prohibited. That year, also, it was ordered that such causeways be constructed on the South-side, from George Steele's, Thomas Hosmer's and Mrs. Wyllys's, to the bridge over Little River; and, on the North-side, from William Phillips's, William Kelsey's and William Westwood's, to the meeting-house. These paths, with those supposed to have been built earlier, would have served most of the inhabitants. Each side was to do its own work; and if either failed to complete the work on or before the last day of September, it was to pay forty shillings to the other side. This was surely a friendly rivalry in preparing the way of the Lord. Such facts show us the early town in its rural simplicity. The value of sidewalks as now constructed, was not recognized for more than a century. In 1758, the streets being "very miry at times, unfit for walking on foot," the efforts of divers persons to make foot walks, probably in front of their own homes, were encouraged by the town, and their walks protected from misuse by horses, very much as the causeways had been in 1646.[1]

Such details help us to understand how encroachments upon their highways came to pass. In those early times they had no thought of future city streets. An old English town would better illustrate their ideal. Highways that were so little regarded by the public naturally became the prey of abutting owners. They pushed out their fences to suit themselves, gradually taking in land that was not occupied by the roadway. This was encouraged by the

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 178.

town's grants of land in the highways and the meeting-house yard. In 1644, John Talcott was given liberty to set a cart house in front of his home lot. Others, from time to time, received similar locations for shops. Being so liberal in such matters, the town would hardly notice the encroachment of a fence. Thus, like the crowd viewing a procession, others moved out to get in line. The width of Main Street was in this way diminished in places, especially north of the square. That the tenants of the Ancient Burying Ground could not follow the custom is doubtless the reason for the width of the street in front of it. In 1683, the town took action to prevent encroachments. The General Assembly also did the same in 1724.[1] The early conditions could not be restored in the town's main streets. The people had slumbered so long that the rights of abutting owners had been secured, and many practical difficulties hindered reform.

It is evident that the settlers needed pounds from the first. Their contention with the Dutch made one imperative on the South-side. On December 26, 1639, it was "ordrd that ther shalbe two pounds made wth 6 Rayls 40 foote square: one on the one syd the River the other on the other side, to be Reddy by Aprell." A pound was also established early at Hockanum; but it was apparently given up and the land allotted. Later, two were located elsewhere.[2] The South-side pound was near the southeast corner of Andrew Bacon's house-lot, on the road from George Steele's to the South Meadow.[3] The North-side pound was northwest of Centinel Hill, near the corner of Thomas Burr's lot. In 1742, the selectmen were authorized to exchange this tract with Thomas Burr, Jr., and a new pound was established near-by on the west side of Trumbull Street.[4]

The changes of a century in the neighborhood of Centinel

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VI: 449, 450; VII: 34.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 46–48, 82, 189; *Original Distribution*, p. 458; Goodwin's *Hist. of East Hartford*, p. 70.

[3] *Original Distribution*, p. 367; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 19, 69; 5: 310; 8: 46, etc.

[4] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 117, 162, 256; *Hartford Land Records*, 7: 112, 356, 357.

Hill, will serve to illustrate the process of development that was carried on in all parts of the settlement. The hill itself was an elongated elevation, with its summit a little west of the present corner where Main Street turns to the northwest. On the theory that civilization reduces hills and fills up valleys, though rarely to a level, the topographical map of Hartford made in 1892, gives the base of this hill in its contour lines. The rise began as far south as Church Street and extended in a curve to the northwest, near Trumbull. The design of the pioneers, apparently, was to have this hill to command the neck on the north, and, at the southern end of a broad highway, the palisado to command the Little River. It was a splendid location for their plantation. Perhaps signals could once be exchanged between the hill and the South Green, as tradition relates. On the east side of the hill the slope descended abruptly into a swale or ravine. The late Dr. Gurdon W. Russell, who had an intimate acquaintance with the neighborhood, once pointed out a spot, in Main Street at the head of Morgan, where he saw in an excavation, twelve or fifteen feet below the present grade, a large log. His conclusion was as above stated, and the records confirm it. In early times there was no road on that side of the hill. The house-lots of Goodman and Lewis, farther south, were bounded on the west by a highway; but those of Talcott and Elmer had Centinel Hill for a western bound. This explains the language of the town votes as to the causeway. It went "vp the lane to the pound." The road from the meeting-house northward had room enough until it came to the hill. Then it was compelled by the swale on the eastern side to follow the western base to the pound, narrowing its width to a "lane." There it divided, the western branch leading to the Cow Pasture, and the eastern swinging around in front of Thomas Spencer's lot to the North Meadow, as shown in Porter's plan. There was a chaseway up the slope from William Westwood's lot, between those of Elmer and Ely. Probably there was a spring in the road to the meadow. In 1644, the town appointed a committee to view "the plase that Nath Elly desiers to draw watter in to his lott outt of the highway." Perhaps a pioneer's path to the spring grew into a chaseway,

which the cattle of Front Street followed to pasture. Its modern successor is Morgan Street, laid out in 1788. The settlers began at an early date to fill up the swale, naturally by grading down the hill. They thus extended their main throughfare northward, to connect directly with the road to the North Meadow. This improvement covered many years. In 1655, the Elmer lot, having passed to Colonel John Allyn, was still bounded west by the hill. Ten years later, the owner was given "liberty to improve the land frō the corner of Mrs Tallcotts ffence to the Chasse lane." The inhabitants were forbidden, in 1660, to "digg or cary away any earth from Sentinell hill," without the consent of Ensign Talcott and John Allyn, under penalty of two shillings a load. Probably the earth was wanted for filling on the east. In 1709, the Allyn lot was bounded west by the highway. As the extent of the hill was decreased, the lane to the pound was widened. An open area was thus established. Next south of it, was the house-lot originally recorded to Mrs. Dorothy Chester. In 1639 her liberty to build upon it was extended two years, but it is not known whether she ever lived there. It was probably acquired by Richard Webb, whose lot bounded it on the south and was included in the three and one-half acres that he sold in 1651 to Bartholomew Barnard. This lot was then bounded on the north, east and west by highways. For many years thereafter, it was the Barnard homestead, around which were gathered the homes of some well-known Hartford families of that time. It was one of the town's fortified houses in 1689, when there was danger from the Indians. The others were the houses of Samuel Wyllys on Charter Oak Hill, James Steele at the corner of Washington Street, and John Olcott on the Windsor Road.[1] At the death of Bartholomew Barnard in 1697, his homestead passed to his son Sergeant John Barnard, who, in 1734, bequeathed the northwest corner to Jonathan Olcott, and the balance to Joseph Olcott. Meanwhile, the hill having disappeared, the abutters had extended their bounds northward. In 1756, Colonel Samuel Talcott petitioned the town for a small piece of land "on the Hill," north of Joseph Olcott's house "at the Turn of the High-

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 228.

way," to set a building upon "for a shop or Ware Houfe." At the same time, Isaac Pratt asked for land at this place for a blacksmith shop. The former purchased, however, part of the Olcott lot. He erected there the warehouse, which is still standing a short distance back from the street. This property he conveyed, in 1770, to his son Samuel Talcott. It then had upon it "a Shop or Store Houfe." Near the old pound Thomas Burr had received in 1695, a grant "oute of y^e^ highway aganst his house." In this shop his son, Thomas, afterwards plied his trade as a shoemaker. Probably there were, later, other small shops in that neighborhood, which ultimately furthered the diminution of the open area. In 1760, the old home where the Barnards and Olcotts had lived, with its barn and orchard, passed out of Joseph Olcott's hands, and, in 1763, it was bought by Captain Jonathan Wadsworth.[1] He also leased the original lot of John Holloway, the blacksmith. This was across the street, and had been an early bequest to the First Church. Thus the site of Centinel Hill was on its way to be divided up and put to the uses of trade, as seen to-day.

The process of transformation illustrated in this locality was carried on everywhere within the settlement. Swales, mudholes and ponds were filled up. There were once two ponds a little west of Main Street and south of Centinel Hill. They were called "Barnard's Ponds," or "Day's Ponds." In 1733, an attempt was made to drain them across Main Street, to which the town objected.[2] Within the memory of recent inhabitants, all the land at the lower end of Pearl and Asylum streets was low and wet. Near High Street, there was a hill where bricks were once made. North of the square, near Market Street, the houses once stood on a considerable elevation. This was also the case on the north side of Asylum Street. Underneath the surface of the present city, with its builded squares, level pavements and easy grades, there are unmistakable signs, sometimes revealed in excavations, of that rough and wooded tract upon which the early settlers labored to bring forth better things.

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 10: 220, 339, 340.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 82.

CHAPTER XI

ALONG THE GREAT RIVER

On February 21, 1636–7, the settlement the forefathers had called "Newe Towne" was formally named by the General Court, "Harteford Towne." The reason assigned for this action in the colonial records is the commendable practice of giving to their new plantations the names of "some Cities and Townes in England, thereby intending to keep vp and leaue to posterity the memorial of seuerall places of note there, as Boston, Hartford, Windsor." [1] The former residence of Rev. Thomas Hooker not being of sufficient note, the birthplace of Rev. Samuel Stone was naturally suggested. This historical relationship to one of the famous cities of England, is now expressed in the seal of the City of Hartford — "Ar. An American Hart proper, fording a stream, trippant, in fess: in a Landskip, in middle base, a Grape Vine bearing fruit, naissant from a strip of earth — all proper. Crest. An American Eagle proper, displayed. Motto. Post Nubila Phoebus." The early purpose of the town's founders had died out, however, when, in 1785, Colonel Samuel Wyllys, alderman, and John Trumbull, Esq., councilman, reported a device for the seal of the newly incorporated city. The year before, a strange craft had appeared on the river. It consisted of two flat-boats lashed together side by side, with a platform on top, upon which circling horses created power for paddle-wheels on each side.[2] The year following, John Fitch won his success with the steamboat at Philadelphia. He is said to have experimented on the Connecticut River earlier. A new era in Hartford's commercial life was at hand.[3] Projects were

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 313; *The Hartford Courant*, Jan. 8, 1895, Dec. 28, 1906, and April 27, 1907.

[2] *The Connecticut Courant*, July 13, 1784.

[3] "The Navigation of the Connecticut River," by Wm. De Loss Love, in *Proc. of the Am. Antiq. Soc.*, April, 1903.

Coat of Arms, after the City's Seal
Adopted, in 1852

The First Seal of the
City of Hartford, 1785

being discussed to deepen the river channel, and were, later, realized. The community was enthusiastic with a revived interest in trade, which many hoped to extend to foreign ports. The day of the Great River that had tarried so long had come. Thus it happened that the above committee reported as follows: "Connecticut River, represented by the figure of an Old man crowned with Rushes, seated against a Rock, holding an Urn, with a Stream flowing from it; at his feet a net, and fish peculiar to the River lying by it, with Barrels and Bales; over his head an Oak growing out of a Cleft in the Rock, and round the whole these words, 'Sigillum Civitatis Hartfordiensis.'" [1]

There is no more appropriate device in which to symbolize the sources of Hartford's early development than this first seal. It sets forth the indebtedness of the town to the Connecticut River. That was the great highway to their settlement from the outside world. To it, they committed many a venture for distant ports. It provided their tables, in season, with the choicest fish. It fertilized their meadows, and it brought to their homes many coveted luxuries. Thus it was the main artery of their early life.

In his plan of Hartford in 1640, Porter located the western bank of the river some distance east of the same in 1824. He evidently thought it had been worn away in the course of two centuries. This is true. The main reason for it was the gradual closing of the channel eastward of two islands lying along the opposite bank. Among the allotments, there was granted to Thomas Bird "an Iland Lying Nere the Eaſt Side of the grett Riuer ouer againſt the Landding plac Contayñ by Eſtimã fortenne acres be it more or les Abutting on the Grett Riuer whare the brim of it was at a ordanary watter in the yeare one thouſand Six hundreth forty & fower." In 1659, the town appointed a committee "to veiw Goodman Birds Island & Stake it out to him." Nothing was done and, in 1660, another committee was named to "apoynt Thomas burd the bounds of his Iland ouer against the town." The necessity for settling its bounds indicates that there was even then a swale between it and the main land. On May 3, 1660, Bird sold this island

[1] *Common Council Records*, A, p. 16.

to Jonathan Gilbert, among whose lands it is described as lying "ouer against y^e^ Comon landing place" and abutting "on y^e^ great riuer weft on y^e^ dutch Island & on y^e^ mead lotts East, & against the litle riuers mouth Sow^th^." Gilbert bought the Dutch island the same year. It was the island of two acres, "ouer againft y^e^ Sow^th^ end of y^e^ litle meadow," that had been sequestered in 1654. The meadow lots east of it were owned, in 1673, by John Crow, who declared in a document that he would not claim any land west of his mere stones, which "Stand & allwayes haue Stood of [on] the Brow of the Hill or Banck on the ends of my [his] lotts, by the run of valey that lyeth between my [his] Sayd meadow lotts, & that which was formerly Caled the dutch Island." [1] It seems, therefore, that these islands were then disappearing into the mainland. In 1640, there was doubtless a large flow of water east of them, and, in some distant past, the channel may have been farther east. These islands remained in posession of the Gilbert family for some years.[2] In 1709 the larger island passed to Samuel Howard. They can now be traced by the contour lines.

As the channel on the east became closed, the force of the current was expended on the western bank and gradually wore it away. The total area of the Little Meadow, however, was not greatly lessened. Most of the diminution was east of the North Meadow creek and north of the landing place, where there was a strip of unallotted land. In 1655 it is described as "an island." At its northern limit was the upper mouth of the creek, for that stream bounded the southernmost lot of the North Meadow on the west and south.[3] The Little Meadow lots, abutting east on the creek, were protected, therefore, by the strip of town land, part of which was gradually worn away. In the course of improvements, the creek's lower mouth was closed and the bed filled in, thus securing to the town for public uses the land along the river. In 1773, the General Assembly granted a petition for a lottery to raise funds for the protection of

[1] *Original Distribution*, p. 391.

[2] *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 50, 401, 520; 2: 19; Manwaring's *Hartford Probate Records*, I: 307; *State Archives: Private Controversies*, II: 130.

[3] *Original Distribution*, p. 104.

this bank. Wharves built there later were called the "Lottery Wharves." It was stated in the memorial that the landing-place had been "much enlarged and made very convenient, but was in danger of being ruined by the river's current, unless defended by public aid.[1] A committee, appointed by the city in 1792 to ascertain what land near the landing was public property, reported that, since 1677, the river's bank had been worn away for a considerable distance.[2] The deeds indicate that there was along the river, in early times, some swamp land. This was doubtless washed away and the depth of water increased.

At the landing-place where there was a substratum of rock, they found a convenient locality for most of their early river traffic. This was an important center for two centuries. Rev. Thomas Hooker may have foreseen the high value of land in the neighborhood when he acquired here four acres. His eastern bound was the creek, the landing-place and the highway to it, now Kilbourn Street. This land descended in the family for several generations. Timothy Stanley owned the triangle south of this, at the corner of Kilbourn and Front streets. It remained in the possession of his family for more than a century. In 1742 it passed to Timothy Bigelow. The Road to the Ferry was bisected by another from the south. The lot east of this abutting on the river, afforded a desirable site for their early warehouses. It comprised one acre. Its original owner was Thomas Scott. In 1652, his heirs sold it, with the home-lot, to Thomas Cadwell.[3] South of it, along the river, John Steele owned two acres, which he sold to William Pantry. To this, other lots were added, and his grandson, John Pantry, owned here twenty-five acres. This tract was afterwards called "Pantry Jones' Pasture." Thomas Cadwell made an exchange of land with the town in 1669. It thus secured for public uses the land along the river. The remainder of Cadwell's lot descended to Esther Cadwell. She married Caleb Bull, and their heirs inherited it. Shortly

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XIV: 118, 119.

[2] *Common Council Records*, A. 2, p. 65.

[3] *Original Distribution*, pp. 62, 476–479; *Common Council Records*, A. 2, pp. 59 ff.

after Thomas Cadwell acquired this lot, he erected upon it a warehouse. It stood where the store of Thomas Bull was located in 1792. As he is believed to have been conducting a private ferry in 1652, he may have used this warehouse in connection with that venture. The account book of John Talcott shows that Cadwell's warehouse was used by the Colony during King Philip's War, probably for the storage of supplies. In 1685 he sold it to Nathaniel Stanley, from whom it passed to Nathaniel Hooker. The latter's son Nathaniel, built there a new warehouse, the frame of which survived in Thomas Bull's store. The town granted liberty, in 1653, to Jonathan Gilbert to set up a warehouse east of the Hooker lot, provided he had the consent of Mrs. Hooker. This site was in the highway west of the landing. He erected the building at once. Very likely he here stored the corn he collected in 1654 for the train-band. He had charge of the military stores for some years. His warehouse was a two-story building. It had a cellar underneath it and a staircase leading to the second floor. This building was standing fifty years later. After Gilbert's death in 1682, his son Samuel sold the north end to Thomas Thornton, and the south end he sold in 1693 to Thomas Hooker, subject to the life use of Widow Mary Gilbert. The town also granted to Jonathan Gilbert, in 1676, "Twenty six Foot of bredth in land by the great riuer & Forty foot in length the former bredth westward to be to him & his heirs forever." The condition was that he and his heirs should maintain the highway thither. This location was next south of the landing, at the north end of the Scott-Cadwell lot. Here he erected a second warehouse, which he also owned at his death. In 1683, this land was forfeited to the town because his heirs refused to keep in repair the highway. Later, this warehouse passed to William Gibbon; in 1696, to William Caddy; in 1698, to William Whiting, and, in 1725, to John Austin. The last-named owner petitioned, in 1736, for liberty to build an addition at the west end, it being then the northernmost warehouse on the bank of the river. In 1761, it was owned by John Ellery. This was the warehouse referred to in 1678, when a committee of the town recommended that the "Land on the North side of Mr

Fire at the Foot of Ferry Street

gillberts warehouse: Betwene the great Riuer [and the] brew of the Little meadow Hill where the ffence Now stands to the mouth of the Little Riuer [North Meadow Creek] bee and Remayne for a Common Landing place which wee Judg Nessesary for the publick." [1] The same year the above-named strip of land along the river was recorded to the town.[2] We have thus a fairly complete plan of the landing-place and its environs in 1678. It continued for years, with few changes, except the erection of other warehouses. We have only to picture to ourselves a highway leading north-east from Front Street to the river, on the south side of the creek's mouth. When this channel was closed and the bed filled, the landing-place was enlarged. Along the river south of it, was the row of early warehouses. The first one, erected by Jonathan Gilbert, was on the west facing the landing. There was evidently a swale parallel with the river. West of it, the grade ascended to the Little Meadow Hill. In 1911, some workmen, who were driving the intercepter tunnel at the foot of Kilbourn Street, found at about low-water level, three large pine logs laid parallel east and west, four feet apart, with cross pieces upon them. An imaginative writer suggested the discovery of Hooker's raft. Probably it was the remains of an early causeway laid across the above swale, by which the settlers reached the landing-place. This approach to the river had become important in 1678. From that time, the landing-place entered upon an era of development that only reached its climax after the revival of commerce in the early years of the city's life.

Concerning the other early warehouses in the row at the landing, the records give further information. George Gardner received from the town, in 1674, one rod square, where he erected a warehouse. The report of 1792 states that his son, Ebenezer Gardner, gave this to Caleb Stanley. Probably it was on or near the site granted to the latter. In 1678, a grant twenty feet square was made to Ensign Nathaniel Stanley for the same purpose. His site was between Cadwell's and the landing. Then, in 1683, a tract sixteen feet wide and twenty-four feet long at the north end of Cad-

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 192. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 184, 190.

well's warehouse, was given to Caleb Stanley. It descended to Timothy Stanley, who sold it in 1743 to Captain William Tiley. A similar grant was made, in 1685, to Richard Edwards, between the warehouses of Caleb and Nathaniel Stanley. This year, also, Joseph Wadsworth and Philip Lewis received liberty to erect one next to the landing-place. North of the landing, Colonel Samuel Talcott erected a warehouse, about the middle of the eighteenth century. It was on his own land. The creek bed had been filled in meanwhile. This warehouse or store was near the mansion-house and other buildings, which Colonel Talcott sold in 1777 to William and Jannet Knox. It passed later to John Chenevard. There was another warehouse at the south end of the row. It was built on the reserved lot of Thomas Cadwell, perhaps by his son Thomas, about 1695, when he became the ferryman. In 1719, it is mentioned in the inventory of Mathew Cadwell, his successor, as "1 Acre and $\frac{1}{4}$ of Land and the Ware houſe that Stands on it." The inventory of his son Mathew in 1723, speaks of it as "the Waor hous and ſhop and Land one which they ſtand." In both cases the value was £70. The latter's heirs sold it, in 1745, to Caleb Bull, Jr., the deed specifying that the warehouse had formerly belonged to Mathew Cadwell.[1] In buildings then standing on this lot, or afterwards erected, Caleb Bull conducted his flaxseed store. All these warehouses would now be considered insignificant, both in size and business. They were owned, however, by the most prominent merchants of Hartford. It was in this little group of buildings that a large part of the river trade of colonial times was carried on. In 1792, this public area at the landing was laid out, and its courses and measurements were recorded.[2] There Thomas K. Brace established later his warehouses and his wharf was located. The site is at present indicated by the promontory east of the railroad tracks, opposite the foot of Kilbourn Street.

The years following King Philip's War also mark an era in the development of the East-side. The committee of 1678 reported as follows: "Allso we haue ordred a Common

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 7: 193.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 342–345.

Landing place uppon Mr Jonathan gillberds Island on the east side of the great Riuer where now itt is, to be ffower rods wide uppon the Banck next the Riuer." Thence they laid out a highway across the island, down the bank where the carts had "allready made a passage," and eastward to the upland.[1] This road was obliged to cross swamp land and swales, over which causeways were built. A road here was already in use and connected with a north and south road, laid out in 1640 along the meadow hill. In 1670, the country road, now Main Street, was established by order of the General Court.[2] In consideration, the proprietors were granted and took twenty rods eastward of their three-mile lots. Other roads followed. Saw-mills were built on the Hockanum, or Saw Mill River.[3] Eligible locations for East-side farms were chosen, and residents there increased. Among early settlers the following were the most prominent families: Bidwell, Burnham, Forbes, Goodwin, Hills, Olcott, Olmsted, Pitkin, Porter, Risley, Spencer and Williams. Thus began an era during which the East-side attained great prosperity.[4]

The ferry across the river was at first, and for many years so far as known, a private enterprise. In 1641, the General Court took notice of Windsor's ferry and encouraged that town to provide a boat for its use, by allowing a charge for passengers.[5] This was Bissell's old ferry, where travellers crossed in going to the Bay. It is quite improbable that Hartford was without similar accommodations. Thomas Cadwell seems most likely to have been this early ferryman, and possibly before him, Edward Stebbins, who lived nearest the landing, did such service. After the distribution of East-side meadow lots, boats must have been constructed of sufficient size for farming use. Animals were transported across and pastured in the meadows. At a later date, the owners of East-side lots owned such a boat in common, as did the "Proprietors of the North Meadow."

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 185, 190, 191; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 401, 520.

[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 133.

[3] *Original Distribution*, p. 553; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 101; 4: 203, 369; 5: 459; *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 262; II: 178; III: 218, 219.

[4] See *East Hartford: its History and Traditions*, by Joseph O. Goodwin.

[5] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 71.

It was called a "great boat." Very likely the town had such a boat in early times. In 1715, the town's boat was kept at a certain place for the use of inhabitants.[1] There was also one on the East-side. At the town meeting, December 22, 1681, the convenience and necessity of having a public ferry at Hartford was considered. A committee was appointed to agree with a suitable person to keep the same for seven years. Thomas Cadwell was the man selected. As his warehouse was at the landing, and his house, after 1652, at the southwest corner of State and Front streets, this service would have been convenient for him. His agreement, dated March 31, 1682, states that he was "to maintaine a suffitiant Boate ffor the passaige of Horse and man: and a Connoe good and suffitiant to Carry ouer single persons."[2] The fares were: Hartford residents, man 1d., horse and man, 3d. in silver, and double fare if in other pay, non-residents or after dark. Thomas Cadwell was thus the lessee of the ferry privilege, though not necessarily the ferryman. He agreed that it should be "carefully attended." He died in 1694. His widow, Elizabeth Cadwell, succeeded him for one year and then his son Thomas. Probably Mathew Cadwell was the next ferryman. He died in 1719 and was succeeded by his widow, Abigail Cadwell, and her son Mathew. The rent was then £10 a year. This son was probably the ferryman in 1723, when he died. His inventory includes the "Cart Booat with the Chain fastened to it," and the "hors booat" and chain. Thus one family conducted this ferry for at least thirty-seven years. Daniel Messenger bought a lot near the landing in 1724, and soon afterward built a house there, being persuaded to do so, he claimed, in the expectation of securing the lease of the ferry. He received the appointment in 1726, and probably in 1727, paying therefor £13. The privilege was then sold to the highest bidder. Daniel Messenger was aggrieved, as he had provided "boats, scows and other vessels." He appealed to the General Assembly for redress, agreeing to take the franchise for ten years, to carry the members free when on

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 318; MS. Vol. II: 21.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 197, 198.

public business, and to pay each year one-tenth of the expense of erecting the Little River bridge.[1] A contract had been made, however, with the successful bidder, Charles, the son of Richard Burnham, for one year. These short term leases were due to the town's hope of securing a charter for the ferry. It petitioned for one in 1727, and several times later, without success. The fares were changed from time to time, and the members of the General Assembly, court officials and town inhabitants were not unwilling to profit by the ferryman's labor.[2] His remuneration, however, was not derived so much from his fares as from the license to sell liquors, which it had become the custom to grant him. That was the reason for Daniel Messenger's liberal offer. In 1728, being then a "tavern-keeper," he sold his property and removed elsewhere. The next ferryman of record was Timothy Bigelow, who was the lessee in 1736. He bought of Daniel Edwards in 1742, the land on the northeast corner of Front and Kilbourn streets, and established there his home. He also kept a tavern. Nathaniel Pease, ferryman in 1746, petitioned for a license. Timothy Bigelow died in 1747. His son Benjamin was later ferryman and host. During his term, in 1757, a project was started to have two ferries at Hartford. When he memorialized the General Assembly in 1759 on the subject, he stated that another place lower down on the river had recently been used as a landing. He admitted the need of two boats and declared that he was willing to keep two, provided the ferry was established at the ancient ferry place and no competition was allowed.[3] This plan was carried out, but no monopoly was granted. Benjamin Bigelow continued as ferryman for some years, but much of the time after 1757 there was a competing ferry. In 1769, the town committee was authorized to make a lease for ten years, the ferryman to have liberty to land his boats anywhere between Mr. Knox's house, north of the ancient landing-place, and Jones's south wharf, which was south

[1] *State Archives: Travel*, I: 157, 171, 173.

[2] *Ibid.*, I: 194, 281; *Conn. Col. Rec.*, IV: 156, 248, 332, 366; VII: 257; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 241, 242.

[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XI: 138, 282.

of the foot of the present Ferry Street, the lower landing-place of later times.[1] In this lease, the inhabitants were to have free passage to meetings and when on public business. This would have meant much more before 1694, when an ecclesiastical society was formed on the East-side. In earlier times there was great disorder in conveying church-goers across the river. The most was made of this fact in the East-side petitions for a separate organization. The rent of the ferry was put to various public uses, such as procuring firewood for the schools and repairing the bridges. In 1719, the inhabitants of West Farms were authorized to expend £9 of the ferry rent in buying land for a burial ground.[2] Across the river by the ferry, there was a large amount of travel during the Revolutionary War. Several boats were in use and, some of the time, two ferries, as in later times. This travel was somewhat relieved, however, by ferries above and below the town.[3] After the incorporation of the city, these augmented needs urged the construction of a bridge.[4]

The earliest wharf of which we have any knowledge, was that probably built by Samuel the son of Thomas Thornton, who owned the north half of the old Gilbert warehouse. In 1702, the town appointed a committee, "to veiw a Small peice of Land that Sam[ll] Thornton desires to wharfe on & lay out the same to him if it prove not predudiciall to the town he to Enjoy the Same as Long as the town Shall see Cause." The next year, he inherited from his father "part of the warehouse at the Common Landing Place." Probably this wharf adjoined the warehouse on the north side. It might have been within the mouth of the creek. We do not note any other wharves for many years. The public landing was used by river merchants. Vessels frequently anchored in the stream, and customers went out to them in boats, the traffic being conducted on the decks. With

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 179, 185, 192, 231.

[2] *Ibid.*, MS. Vol. II: 13.

[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, V: 354; VI: 322; *State Archives: Travel*, I: 138, 139, 189. See "Ferries in Early Days" in *The Hartford Times*, Sept. 29, 1908; July 2, 1909; Aug. 23, 1910.

[4] *Memorial Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 369–371; Goodwin's *East Hartford*, pp. 195–197; Wright's *Crossing the Connecticut*, pp. 5 ff.

the revival of trade after the Revolutionary War, wharves multiplied very rapidly. Solomon Porter's survey of 1790 notes those of Jones, Bull and Olcott in front of the old warehouses. In 1824, there were twenty between Dutch Point and Morgan's bridge. The Connecticut River was then at the height of its commercial renown.

The impression prevails quite generally that the eastern section of Hartford was populous and busy with mercantile life during colonial times. Those conditions were not brought about until the nineteenth century, after many years of development. One who walked through Front Street, from the fordway at Little River northward in 1775, saw little to suggest its appearance fifty years later. There were some scattered homesteads on the west side of the street, with barns, gardens and orchards. On the east side, the entire southern portion was a meadow that had long been known as "Haynes' Pasture." It contained about twenty-three acres. At an early date, the Haynes family began to gather the original lots into this tract. After the Revolutionary War, the owner, John Haynes Lord, yielded to the pressure of business interests and sold certain lots. Ashbel Wells Jr. erected there a brick store in 1787. He made and sold pottery, whence the name Potter's Lane. Captain John Chenevard also bought on the Little River and established there a wharf. A still-house was near. In 1786, General Jeremiah Wadsworth purchased five acres, adding to two tracts sold to him in 1783 and 1784 from the Pantry lot. To him the credit was due for the development of commercial interests along that water front. Probably the first house erected in this portion of the meadow was that of Hannah Watson. She sold two acres to Caleb Bull in 1774, with the house where she lived. The lot west of this she had deeded to William Watson in 1771. When it passed, in 1773, to Asa Benton, it had upon it a new house, partly built. North of this, the next house was Pantry Jones's, south of Jones Lane. His homestead and adjoining pasture occupied a considerable area. It was through the southern part of this tract, then owned by his son Nathaniel Jones, that lower State Street was opened in 1800. In 1783, Pantry Jones sold the northwest corner

to Dr. Solomon Smith, who built there a house and store. In 1785, it passed to his son Daniel Smith, who sold to John Hall, a hardware and drygoods merchant. In 1781, Pantry Jones deeded to Barnabas Dean and Company the lot near the river, long occupied by their distillery and store. Perhaps the latter building was erected earlier by Pantry Jones. This firm was formed in 1779. It is said that General Nathaniel Greene was a silent partner. Northwest of the distillery, there was a blacksmith's shop, known as Ensign's. Along Ferry and Kilbourn streets the greater part of the business life in this section gathered. In 1775, this was mainly in the warehouses by the landing-place. Here, in 1784, William and George Bull sold, among other articles, "fire stoves." They advertised these in 1787 as "Franklin stoves." Frederick Bull was located here in 1775. He dealt in ironware, kettles and pots. Before 1788, when Commerce Street was accepted by the city, there was a roadway, which followed its general course, west of the warehouses. It was called "Cheapside" — a name applied, in 1811, to Main Street, north of State. On the northwest corner, where it crossed Jones Lane, Caleb Bull had a red house and store. It was leased to Elisha Vibbard and, in 1789, sold to him. Here, too, Aaron Bradley, the blacksmith, was located in 1784. He bought land there in 1787. The next year he advertised as at the sign of the "Horseshoe," No. 3 Cheapside, Jones Street. He also invited his patrons to another shop in the North Shipyard at the sign of the "Strap and Dead Eye." In 1786, Charles Hopkins removed into his brick store in Cheapside. West of Bradley's shop John Watson Jr. purchased a location from Caleb Bull in 1787. He had owned before 1782 the Normand Morrison warehouse at the landing, which then passed to Captain John Chenevard. It was south of one belonging to the heirs of Captain Samuel Olcott, and north of the store of Captain William Bull. North of these buildings there was a lumber yard, owned by Caleb Bull. His son James Bull leased the corner of it, in 1790, to J. Beckwith for a shop. On the west end of this tract Samuel Kilbourn located his house and store in 1775. At the foot of Ferry Street was the ferry house built by Pantry Jones,

View of Hartford from the East Side of Connecticut River, 1841

and bequeathed in 1794 to his nephew, John Jones. It remained to recent times. This was then the Ferry Way, called later the "Public Landing." In 1775 the old landing was still in use — and a busy place it was during the Revolutionary War. Just north of it, was the Knox Tavern. William Knox married Jannet, the daughter of Normand Morrison, and, after his death, she married John Calder. At this tavern they did a thriving business. Revolutionary prisoners on parole were boarded there.[1] William Knox was also the ferryman, and practically in control of the situation. In 1783, he advertised to sell grindstones there. That would have been an appropriate name for the kind of intoxicants that tradition declares he sold at his tavern. The stores of Joseph Barrett and Major John Caldwell were on the other side of Commerce Street. In 1770, Blackleach Wells bought a small house on the southeast corner. West of these, near the northeast corner of Kilbourn and Front streets, Captain John Bigelow had a house and store in 1771, and others before him. North of this was the Hooker tract, where Daniel Messenger had located in 1725. At the beginning of the Revolutionary War, the meadow north of Talcott Lane was mostly devoted to pasturage. Its early owner was William Westwood, whose heir was Aaron Cook. Here, in 1756, was "Cook's Little Meadow," which was then acquired by Pantry Jones, and sold in 1787 to General Wadsworth and others. At this time, the Maritime Company bought up this land for speculative purposes. John Tiley owned the lot north of that above-named. It was called the "Creek lot," and was the location of the North Shipyard. In 1787, Joseph Toocker, a ship-builder, leased land and built a house on the west side of the passway along the river.[2] He was doubtless engaged at his trade in the neighboring shipyard, where many vessels had formerly been built and continued to be for some years.[3]

[1] "Major French's Journal," in *Conn. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, I: 213, 215.

[2] Boardman's *Ancestry of Jane Maria Greenleaf*, pp. 97–100; *Hartford Land Records*, 18: 408, 474.

[3] In 1727, John Tiley, Jr., sold to John Caldwell and John Knowles the hull, mast, boom and bowsprit of the sloop *Speedwell*, seventy-nine tons. — *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 208.

This survey from the records gives us in outline a picture of the land along the Great River as it appeared at the close of the colonial period, with the entrance upon it of those activities that eventually transformed it. Early engravings show, in some measure, what it became. The old ferry, by which farmers from the East-side entered the town, gathered trade. Advertisements of 1787, show that shop-keepers on both sides of the river, were offering West India goods in exchange for butter and cheese. Arriving travellers, also, needed an inn and sometimes a horse-shoer. The river trade demanded warehouses, and these sufficed for colonial times. At length, however, there came a new era, and with it another generation of merchants. Then the Great River claimed its opportunity.

CHAPTER XII

THE BANKS OF THE RIVERET

The town of Hartford once had in its ancient riveret a great natural source of beauty. In the days of the forefathers it was a clear and sparkling stream, except in times of freshet or flood. DeVries described its appearance in 1639, in his reference to "a high woodland out of which comes a valley which makes the kill or creek." What a trout stream it must have been in those days! It had its deep pools and its areas where it could spread out its skirts on occasion. Its springtime waters, after tumbling over a natural fall, rushed down between high banks, over a rocky incline and at last found quietness at the level of the Great River. The Dutch traders at once saw the advantage of its mouth as a harbor. It was protected from the Connecticut's current by the protruding foot of the Little Meadow. There they could entertain the canoes of many Indians who came to trade, and their own sloop was largely concealed from view. This must have been in those days an interesting port. Let us try to imagine two rows of settlers' homes, with their out-buildings and yards, one on either side of this stream, from the eastern limit of Bushnell Park to the river. No old rookeries shut them off from a view of their neighbors across the stream — nothing but the trees and shrubbery of their front yards. The distance was too great to suit lovers, but perhaps some young Leander swam this Hellespont, or knew a good place to wade across. How pleasant it must have been along the riveret's banks, to listen at evening's hour to the purling stream, to recline underneath the shade on a summer noontime, or to sail toy boats down with the current, freighted with loving messages for dear old England. Such was life along the riveret in the days of the forefathers, and all the early residents on its banks passed away with their generation before there were any material changes.

The formal baptismal name of this stream was the "Little River." Sometimes, though rarely, as the boundary between the two "sides," the "river" was a sufficient designation. In the town votes, as early as 1642, they used the diminutive term "riveret," and "rivulet" was favored in the land records. Then in the last decade of the century when its mills multiplied, it came to be called "Mill River," a name especially applied to the main stream. The early designation of the south fork was "Hog River," and of the north fork "Ox Pasture River." These were so termed because of abutting pastures for the animals named. Quite recently, but with some fitness, the former title has been extended to the entire stream.

The earliest public service that has been attributed to the riveret is turning the wheel of Mathew Allyn's mill. Here, for some years, the corn of the forefathers was ground. Allyn's first mill was probably built in 1636, soon after the arrival of Hooker's company. The site may have been chosen in 1635 by the pioneers, or earlier by John Hall. It stood on his two-acre mill lot, part of which is the planted bank north of the river in West Bushnell Park. The western section of the road from the Meeting House to the Mill, now Ford and Asylum streets, ran through it, continuing across Brick-kiln or Gully Brook to the Ox Pasture. The entry of this lot was made under the date February 1639–40, and it is believed just before Allyn abandoned his first and completed his second mill.[1] It states that his mill was then standing on this lot and that there was "an iſland on the fouth west ſide of the mill." The northern bound was his own ten-acre tract in Westfield, made up largely of swamp land, through which the brook flowed from the north. The owner thus had a considerable flowage, secured by damming the brook, which then entered the riveret some distance east of the present stepping stones. In the author's opinion, Allyn's first mill utilized this water privilege and not the riveret. This belief is favored by the fact that these adjoining tracts were granted to him by the plantation. However, a pen sketch of 1685 notes the "place where Mr Alyns first mill stood," and it was ap-

[1] *Original Distribution*, p. 145.

parently near the present stepping stones.[1] This mill is thought also to have been on the west side of the brook's mouth. The mill lot extended westward of this to John Skinner's land.[2] This location harmonizes with a town vote thought to date in 1637, appointing Thomas Scott to "keep in good Repayre the bridg over the bri[ck kiln] swam[p] brooke leading to the mill." This first mill was hastily erected to meet immediate needs. It was probably of the simplest construction of pioneer times, still to be seen among the mountaineers of the south. Its shaft was an upright timber, with vertical paddle blades morticed in at the lower end for a wheel, and the nether mill-stone was secured at the upper end of the shaft. Obviously the swift current from a mill-pond was most advantageous for such a mill. We have no other references to this mill, except that in 1644 it was forbidden to ret hemp or flax in the riveret below "that place whare M[r] Allens mill ded first stand."[3]

In 1639, Mathew Allyn decided to erect a new mill, having then very likely improved facilities. About the same time, the town conceived the idea of owning its own mill. It appointed committees in September of that year to "vew for a place to set a mill," and to see what Mr. Allyn "hath agaynst seting vp of another mill." A controversy ensued. It did not, however, deter the miller from carrying out his project. Perhaps he was assisted in this by John Hall, a man of skill in such construction work. He located his second mill on the southwest corner of his island. There he made a dam across the riveret, noted in the above-named sketch as the "Place where the former dam of M[r] Allyn's mill was." Here he had the advantage of the channel between his island and the main land on the south, probably used as a mill-race. The plans for this mill seem to have been made before his mill lot was recorded, for it is stipulated therein that he had a right to dig and carry away earth from the bank southwest of his island "for the ufe of his mill" — a valuable privilege in constructing his dam and levelling up his mill yard. His problem was to make a convenient way to this mill from the north side

[1] *State Archives: Private Controversies*, III: 73.
[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. 145, 309.
[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 75.

of the riveret. On January 11, 1640–41, Mr. Allyn promised "To macke a waie offer To y^e^ mill so y^t^ good man hall wold doe it for 20^s^ & m^r^ Alin Layd him stufe," and the fragmentary record shows that the erection of a bridge was intended. At the same time the town, on its part, voted to "make afence Leading To y^e^ mill through m^rs^ spencers grownd & giue hir satisfacone for y^t^ ground," evidently for a roadway. She was the widow of William Spencer and lived just across the riveret west of the mill, where the Sigourney mansion is. This plan was carried out. In 1645, her second husband, William Edwards, acknowledged the receipt of "damages done by the way to the Millne" through his home-lot. The approach to this mill from the north side was, therefore, by a short highway diverging southward from the road to the Ox Pasture, and across the riveret by a bridge opposite the mill. The way to the Armory from Asylum Street now follows the course of this highway. During the period when John Steele made his entries in the *Original Distribution*, he distinguished this as the "old mill." It had hardly been finished before the delayed project for a town mill came to effect, in the erection of one at the falls below. The plan provided that it should not "preiuduse the mill of the sd m^r^ Mathew Allen by stopping the water," but the erection of a competing mill renewed the dispute. In 1643 arbitrators were appointed to settle these differences. Their success is doubtful. Each mill doubtless had its friends and patrons. The rivalry continued for some years. After such a pioneer outlay as Mathew Allyn had made for the town's benefit, he probably felt aggrieved by this competition. May it not have been this controversy, rather than any religious differences, that was at the root of his trouble with the church, for which, in 1644, he was excluded from its fellowship? He removed to Windsor soon afterwards, and few men in the Colony had greater influence, or received more honors than he in his after life.

In 1653, Mathew Allyn deeded his mill lot to his son, John Allyn. This entry was made by William Andrews, evidently from the earlier record, for, like that, he omitted the word "west" after naming John Skinner's land, and did

not give contemporary abutters. He designates the lot, however, as that upon which "a mill stood." From the tense of this verb, we infer that this mill had then fallen into disuse. It is possible that a freshet had cut across through the mill-race, making the island of later times. This was long called "Allyn's Island," and later "City Island," though it was found in 1841 that the city did not own it.[1] On or near this island, one of Mathew Allyn's descendants has erected the Corning fountain. The disuse of this mill may also account for the contemporary project of the town to enlarge its mill, or build a new one, as presently related. It is improbable that this mill was ever revived. John Allyn formed a partnership later with John Bidwell Jr. in that business, thus establishing the "Upper Mills," which survived as "Imlay's Mills" to recent times. The lot next south of Allyn's Island originally belonged to John Wilcox, from whom it passed to his son-in-law Thomas Long. In 1681, John Bidwell bought part of this lot. The tract was seventeen rods along the riveret and three rods wide, or fifty-one square rods.[2] Thus Allyn united his interests with those of Bidwell, the most extensive and experienced mill owner of his day.[3] They then erected a mill, which eventually grew into a group, where milling of various kinds was carried on for years. Their dam was located above the former. The testimony of 1685 was that "Mr Allyn's old mill dam stood much lower than the present dam." Joseph Mygatt's project in 1682, to exchange land with the town, probably contemplated access to these mills. It was for "the conueniancy off a Bridg or highway ouer the River," and anticipated "Badger's Road" as laid out in 1741.[4] The Bidwell interest passed in 1692 to his heirs, and, in 1700, Sarah Bidwell sold to John Marsh Jr. one moiety in the mills, then being "much out of repair." This grantee sold, in 1704, to Joseph and William Whiting, who, as heirs of Captain John Allyn in 1696, and by purchase, had acquired his half interest. Thus the Whitings became

[1] *Common Council Records*, Vol. F, pp. 122, 124.

[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. 461, 462, 526.

[3] Inventory of John Bidwell, 1692; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, 1: 230; *State Archives: Private Controversies*, I: 72 a.

[4] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 201, 212, 224, 231.

the sole owners of this property, with the island and mill lot. They sold the mills, in 1712, to Benjamin Graham and Joseph Mygatt; and these families, with divided interests, were associated with them for years. About 1727, Joseph Tillotson acquired three-fourths of the grist-mill, with the whole of the bolting-mill, the other one-fourth of the grist-mill being owned by Richard Seymour, who also had one-fourth of the saw-mill and the fulling-mill. Three-fourths of the saw-mill were still held by the Graham and Mygatt heirs. Then Jonathan Pratt purchased the grist-mill, with one-fourth of the saw-mill, which interests he sold, in 1737, to Daniel Badger, who also secured, through Thomas Andrus in 1741, another fourth of the saw-mill. Badger conducted these mills until 1744, and they were commonly called "Badger's Mills." He sold, through Jonathan Yeomans, to John Ellery, who also bought from Jonathan Seymour the one-half of the saw-mill that had passed from Isaac Graham through Timothy Andrus and Timothy Marsh. Thus the upper mills had a single owner. They were then called "Ellery's Mills." During this period rights in the dam were usually in proportion to each owner's mill interest. The mill yard remained as originally laid out. East of it, was a two-acre lot with a dwelling-house, which also passed to successive millers. On the north of this lot, ran the road to the upper mills, which furnished access to them from the South-side. In 1741, a road was laid out from the North-side, diverging from Asylum Street and crossing the riveret by a bridge near the present structure. It was called "Badger's Road."[1] The mill plant was improved during the ownership of John and William Ellery. From the latter, John Ledyard secured a half interest, in 1767. They and their heirs were in control for many years. In 1814, Benjamin Wood became the owner and added a cotton mill. The property passed from him, through Henry Seymour, to Samuel Ledlie in 1817, and he sold, in 1820, to William H. Imlay, whence the name "Imlay's Mills." A picture of them in the possession of the Connecticut Historical Society, was drawn from the western bank of the river, and represents their appearance during the

[1] *Ibid.*, MS. Vol. II: 111, 114.

first half of the last century. The history of these mills furnishes a good example of the persistence of such business enterprises during colonial times. Near the north end of the old fordway, a novel foot-bridge was built, in 1828. At either end were casks filled with stones, which were spanned by a large timber, to which cleats were nailed. This bridge was ten feet above the water.[1] It was called "Imlay's Bridge," and a sketch of it by Frederick B. Perkins has been preserved by the Connecticut Historical Society. The bridge at Ford Street was erected in 1850.

The early project for a town mill was doubtless suggested by the greater convenience of one at the falls, and the need of a bridge there. In those days, a bridge was a natural adjunct to a mill. So the plan of 1639 included both.[2] It would seem that the committee then appointed, thought to settle a disagreement by having two bridges, one near the mill and the other near the fordway, to accommodate "the lower pt of the Towne." The latter was to be a cart bridge, ten feet higher than the great flood of 1638–9.[3] On April 15, 1640, an agreement was recorded for carrying out this project. Possibly the lower bridge was built that season, as the upper bridge, when erected, was called the "New Bridge," but the entire plan was not carried out, perhaps for lack of unanimity or the expense. The outcome was that, on January 9, 1640–41, liberty was given to Edward Hopkins and John Haynes "To sett vp amill & a bridg one y^{e} Litell River ofer against y^{e} palesadoe att theare owne p^{r}per Charge." The bridge was to be "a strong suficientt Cartt Bridg To be Twelfe footte wide bettwene y^{e} Rayles wth Turned Ballesters one y^{e} Top." They were to be finished before the following winter and to be kept

[1] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 371; *The Hartford Post*, Feb. 23, 1884.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 7, 14, 30, 36–38.

[3] "The great flood began on the 5th of March. On the 11th of March it began to fall, but by reason of much rain on the 12th day, it rose very high." Mathew Grant's *Church Record*. There was another exceptional flood in May and June, 1642. In 1683 and 1692, the water rose to 26 feet. On May 1, 1854, the height was "25½ Feet above Low water Mark," as stated on the picture of "The Flood of 1854," though *Geer's Directory* gives it as 29 ft. 10 in. In 1801, the height was 27 ft. 8 in., which was the highest of record to that date. The water has reached 26 ft. or over in 1841, 1843, 1854, 1859, 1862, 1869, and 1896. The most damaging freshets on the Little River have not been necessarily in the years of great floods on the Connecticut River.

in repair four years, when the expenses were to be adjusted. The town was to pay £120 toward the enterprise. This agreement was signed by Edward Hopkins and the townsmen. Probably the work was completed before September 2, 1641, when Hopkins's "halfe the Myll stand[ing] by the New Bridge" was attached.[1]

Leaving the bridge and its successors for later consideration, we follow the history of the mills located at the falls. This first town mill, conveniently distinguished as Hopkins's mill, was located on the north bank of the riveret, just below the falls. It is true that the palisado was on the north side, and a location "over against" it might seem to mean across the riveret; but, as there is positive evidence of its being on the north side, either a change of site was made, or the above phrase was used in an obsolete sense, meaning "in front of" the palisado, the entrance to which was, therefore, on the west. The corner lot opposite was bounded south and west by the "hyway leadding to the mill."[2] This could only refer to Hopkins's mill, and establishes its location. Possibly this was the only mill in operation in 1655, and increased facilities were needed. A committee was then appointed to treat with Robert Hayward of Windsor, and later to agree with Thomas Bunce to erect a new mill. Finally the inhabitants voted, January 23, 1655–6, to appoint John Talcott, William Westwood, Nathaniel Ward and William Wadsworth to agree with workmen for the construction of a mill "upon the townes account."[3] At the same time, they owned the action of a previous committee in buying Hopkins's share of "the old mill with the appurtenances." The expenses of this venture were to be paid by rates levied upon the estates of the inhabitants. In three years these amounted to about £550.[4] The total of each inhabitant's assessment constituted his propriety interest in the mills. It is a good illustration of the method, already discussed, by which the proportions of the ancient proprietors were determined.

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 67.

[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. 107, 255, 438.

[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 106–109.

[4] *Ibid.*, I: 109, 114, 120, 122, 130, 134, 140; *Original Distribution*, pp. 539, 546, 549.

A mill book was kept, in which these shares were recorded, and they were passed by deed, or will, to new owners. Hopkins's mill was not displaced by the new building, but the latter adjoined it. The property is described in 1711 as "two certain water grinding mills . . . under one roof or house." [1] There are other references to them as "two grist-mills." West of the mills there was a watering-place for public use, called, in 1812, the "Town Lane." In early years, these mills were managed by a committee chosen by the inhabitants. They employed a miller. Apparently, this town mill paid, for, in 1658, a vote was passed to reimburse from its profits the committee that built the mill. The subsequent history of this mill is recorded in many conveyances. About 1720, Nathaniel Stanley acquired some of the scattered shares in it. William Stanley increased these holdings. He had a controlling interest in 1792. Consider Burt then secured it, partly by leasing Stanley's rights. The plant was then commonly called "Burt's Mills." In 1805, Bela Burt and Solomon Loomis succeeded. They sold, in 1812, to Eliphalet and Heman Averill, whose partner was James Babcock. Horace Burr bought out the Averills in 1815, and, in 1819, Ira Todd acquired the control. They then received the name "Todd's Mills." A clothier's and carding mill had been added to the grist-mills. Todd was very enterprising. He purchased from Reuben Wadsworth in 1829, his share of the "finishing mill" on the south bank of the stream, and, in 1833, he acquired the share of James Taylor. He sold a half interest in the mills on both sides, the latter year, to Leonard Daniels, to whom another quarter passed, from Lucius Nichols in 1836, and the balance, excepting the Stanley interest, from Lemuel Humphrey in 1838. The rights of William Stanley had been bequeathed to the Second Ecclesiastical Society. Thus these ancient mills enter the history of our own times.[2]

We turn back to follow the history of the town's main bridge. Early intercourse between the plantations at this place was by a fordway over a ledge of rocks, now visible at low water. East of the mill there was, in later times, a

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 2: 107.

[2] *The Hartford Courant*, June 29, 1912; *The Hartford Times*, July 15, 1891.

"passway to the river." A similar reservation was on the south side of the stream. Here, it is thought, their earliest bridges were located. The proprietors of the old mills erected east of this a small house called the "miller's house." If they carried out the original plan, their first bridge was twelve feet wide, with rails on either side. Its substructure, we may infer, was not very heavy. Winthrop tells us that in 1645–6, there was "so sudden a thaw in the spring (the snow lying very deep) and much rain withal, that it bare down the bridge at Hartford." [1] Of its rebuilding we have only hints in the accounts of 1648, which refer to Mr. Haynes's rate "when the Brig was Biultt," and a payment to Thomas Bunce "for work at the Brig." That it was repaired the same year, and its supports were strengthened in 1651, may indicate that the freshets made it hard to maintain their structure. At the latter date, the General Court, then in session, excused some from training, "to bee imployed about the raising of the worke prepared for the supporte of the great bridge." It was again repaired in 1660 and 1667; but it was so old in 1671, that it was a question whether it could be made "safe & secure for Foot Folkes to pass ouer." At this time, there was a difference of opinion as to the best location for a new bridge. The Second Church had been recently organized. A meeting-house was in process of erection. Attendants there would naturally favor a location nearer or at Main Street, a short distance from the new church. There was delay.[2] The old bridge was examined by the townsmen and again by experts. One night, in the autumn of 1672, their differences were brought to an issue. The old bridge was burned. Two of the town's young men were arrested, as being "deeply suspicious" of causing the fire. They were finally discharged.[3] No doubt some thought it was justifiable arson. The town then appointed a committee "to bulde a good bridg ouer the riuer for passidg for horce & foott one y^e^ publick Charge of y^e^ toune & the toune leues it with y^e^ aforesaide Committy to order y^e^ dimenchons of y^e^ said bridg and the place whare itt shuld be ereckted." [4] The

[1] Winthrop's *History*. II: 311.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 164.
[3] *Probate Records, Book III, County Court*, 1663–1677, p. 127.
[4] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 167.

Little River about 1854

town votes do not disclose the results of this action. A bridge was doubtless built at once, and, in the writer's opinion, near or at Main Street. Some calamity befell this bridge, for, in 1676, the town was in need of a "present passage to pass over the riuer," until another could be built. They then considered a stone bridge, indicating some impatience with recent wooden structures. Again they were building a bridge in 1691, for a present passage over Mill River. From this time, the town bridge assumed a large importance. The two "Sides" which had maintained from the beginning certain individual interests, began to find more in common, along the dividing stream. It had, for some occupations, decided advantages over the landing or the square. Intercourse increased. The fordways were still in use. In 1702 they also resorted to a ferryman, probably at the lower crossing when the bridge was closed. The transformation along this dividing stream was gradual, and only culminated after many years. Still the days of the riveret's natural beauties were passing away. In 1728, the town authorized the building of a "new bridge," for which £130 were levied. It was their most ambitious effort hitherto. Captain Stanley, who lived near, was given the care of it. This was more generally called the "Town Bridge." Another was authorized in 1742, at a cost of £300. It was popularly termed the "Great Bridge" and lasted until 1756. Another was built in 1769. In 1780, a stone bridge was considered, to be paid for by a lottery. The plan failed and a new one was built in 1786. Porter's sketch of it, on his survey of 1790, indicates that it was of simple but strong construction. The need of repairing an old bridge, or building a new one, was before the town in 1801, 1804, 1807 and 1817. The plan of 1804 contemplated one not less than forty, nor more than forty-four feet wide. Earlier bridges had probably not exceeded thirty feet. Stone piers to protect the supports were proposed in 1817. Finally, however, in 1832, a stone bridge was voted, and it was erected the following year.[1] Many doubts were then expressed as to the stability of an arch with a span of one hundred and four feet. This is now the Main Street bridge.

[1] *Ibid.*, MS. Vol. III: 151, 154, 160, 165, 166; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 368, 369.

It was widened twenty feet east of earlier bridges and necessitated raising the highway six feet near it, with the lowering of the grade northward.

That which contributed most to alter the appearance of the riveret, was the town's leasing of land along its banks. Locations had been granted, now and then, for shops on public land, but the earlier development was elsewhere. In 1695, Ebenezer Gilbert was given such a privilege on the south bank of the riveret. Other grants soon followed. In 1701, Thomas Gilbert was voted a location for a barber shop on the north bank, west of the bridge. Some of these grants were regarded as temporary and were not recorded. The practice grew, however, into a system of leases. The first of these was made in 1737, for twenty years. In 1753, forty years was the usual term. Within six years, a dozen were made. Then the town in 1760, having examined into all grants and leases, appointed a committee to sell and dispose of the lands on both banks east of the mills. Rules were adopted for the adjustment of all rights of occupants and future leases. The proceeds were to be used in erecting and maintaining the great bridge. It does not appear that new leases were made under this action. In 1769, another committee was appointed to carry out the rules. A new bridge was then in contemplation. Twice the activities of the committee were revived by other appointments. After the Revolutionary War, however, leases were common. The period was then nine hundred and ninety-nine years. In 1824, in consideration of the location of Washington College in Hartford, the town authorized the selectmen to quitclaim the rentals and fee in these leased lands to the amount of $5000 to the said institution.[1] The trustees of Trinity College have since disposed of most of this interest.

The reader can best gather information concerning the changes along the Little River in colonial times, by following it westward from the mouth. On the right is Dutch Point, at first a low and sandy tract, then a part of John Haynes's pasture. It passed, in 1792, to John Ellery. Later it was occupied for occasional ship-building, and

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 38: 377–405; *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. III: 113; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 373.

finally claimed for manufacturing. In 1790, Porter located there a saw-mill. This gave place to Taylor's planing-mill, which was burned in 1849. Barber, in his *Historical Collections*, shows a picture of Dutch Point as it appeared in his day. On the south side of the stream, west of the Point, was the House of Hope. For many years, the fields on either side were used for hay and pasture. Taylor's wharf on the north bank is noted in 1790. The bridge at Commerce Street was built in 1858. Between that point and Front Street on the right, there were originally two inlets, one of which is said to have been partly filled with the ruins of the Dutch fort. Abreast of John Chenevard's wharf, there was once an island, called "Sheldon's Island," after the family living near. The fordway crossed from Front to Governor Street. It was above the limits of the riveret's navigation, except at high water. The steamboat *Barnett* took advantage of one spring flood, to go up stream over Daniels's dam, as far as Imlay's foot bridge. At the beginning, there was a landing on the left, east of the fordway. It was near Governor Hopkins's house. There, the earliest merchants of the South-side Plantation conducted some of their trade. Perhaps there was also a landing on the north side of the stream. In 1793, when commercial interests increased in that neighborhood, the town laid out a public landing there. Continuing up stream, we pass on the right bank, the site of John Nichols's tailor shop and Daniel Hinsdale's store, and reach the lower dam. Here, in 1779, Thomas Seymour asked liberty to build a grist and saw-mill. It was opposite his homestead. He received, in 1787, the usual lease of the premises. The grist-mill was on the north, and the saw-mill on the south side of the riveret. Both continued for many years. In 1824, Ward's Woolen Manufactory occupied the former site. Little did Thomas Hooker imagine such a building across the street from his dooryard. The Ledyard elm that stood near was witness to these changes. West of the saw-mill there was another inlet or creek, over which a stone bridge was built before 1783. Most of the land on both banks westward to the falls was leased. On the north side, was the Ellery house, now standing at the end of Prospect Street. East of the bridge, Joseph Shepard

leased land, in 1737, for his cooper shop. The old Shepard house is now east of the site. In 1769, Joseph Reed leased between Shepard and the bridge. His property was confiscated during the Revolutionary War, he having "joined the enemies of his country." It was sold in 1781, to buy saddles for Colonel Sheldon's regiment of dragoons.[1] Thus the owner paid his annual rental of "one peppercorn." The land passed to Nathaniel Patten and later to the Franklin Market Company. The junction of Arch and Main Streets was called "Shepard's Corner." At the northwest corner of the bridge, was "Stanley's Corner." Here, in 1755, Colonel Nathaniel Stanley obtained a lease of a lot on the river's bank for forty years. John and Hephzibah Skinner became the lessees in 1787, having a house there. In 1790, Solomon Porter noted as landmarks west of them the houses of George Burnham, Benjamin Wood and Jacob Norton. Hudson and Goodwin were lessees next on the west. Then came the old miller's house. Near the mill, from 1773 to 1781, John Cable carried on a bakery, quite famous in its day. North of the mills there were more leased lots. In 1787, Ralph Pomeroy obtained a location near Mulberry Street bridge. There a stock company began the manufacture of broadcloth, a suit of which was worn by President Washington at his first inauguration.[2] It was called "Congress brown." Later Cyprian Nichols had a soap and candle factory in this building. Factory Lane, or Gold Street, led thither from Main Street. The passways to the riveret along this bank were reserved for the use of fire engines. There they had occasional "washes."

On the south bank of the stream, west of the saw-mill, some of the earliest leases were given. Thomas Hender was about seven rods west of the stone bridge across the inlet. In 1781 Aaron Bradley's blacksmith shop was west of this. He was succeeded by Adonijah Brainard. A watering-place was west of this shop. Richard Butler came next. At the southeast arm of the bridge, was Thomas Seymour's store of colonial days. In 1767, when he died, he had two shops, one on each side of the Little River, near

[1] *State Archives: Revolutionary War*, 34: 118, 119, 147, 253.

[2] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 564, 565; *New England States*, I: 195, 196.

the bridge. In its later years the south side shop was occupied by Elizur Skinner's restaurant, called "Washington Recess." [1] Across the street westward, John Lord was the first tenant in early times. He had a house and shop there, three rods west of the Great Bridge.[2] Later John Thomas gathered several properties there. They passed from him to Josiah Benton. Porter's landmarks between this tract and the mill dam in 1790, were Joel Carter's house, formerly Ezra Hyde's, and Reuben Wadsworth's. Between the Thomas and Hyde lots, was that where Cotton Murray had his store in 1777. It had previously belonged to Peter R. Livingston. He acquired it from Andrew Thompson, who purchased it from Daniel Bull in 1762. It was a well-known store in its day, and stood north of Moses Butler's tavern. At an early date Henry Hayward, a malster, bought the lot originally owned by John Barnard, also a malster. He deeded, in 1698, to his son Samuel Hayward his house and "also his malt-house," north of the highway on the river's bank. This location was devoted to that business for many years. The malt-house was a landmark for locating later grants, such as Ebenezer Gilbert's shop, James Taylor's fulling-mill and others.

In colonial times the riveret west of the mills had no resemblance to the present stream. The dam then held back a considerable mill-pond. The land along its banks was low. In 1636, the area now included in Bushnell Park had a wild, woods-like appearance. Its islands were a picturesque feature. The land was claimed for tanneries, and it degenerated. Any one who remembers this tract before the park was created will not wonder that the proposition of Rev. Dr. Horace Bushnell was ridiculed by some as absurd.[3] Porter's survey of 1790 shows three islands within the east part. In 1824 there were only two, Ward's Island and City Island. The latter was probably made up of two as seen in 1790. John Bidwell was the original owner of an island here, about two roods in extent. It abutted southward on the river, and northward on a creek coming

[1] *The Hartford Times*, March 18, 1891; *Hartford Land Records*, 56: 368.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol II: 167; *Hartford Land Records*, 10: 238.

[3] "Letter of Dr. Bushnell" in *Hearth and Home*, Feb. 6, 1869, and *The Hartford Courant*, April 22, 1908; *Connecticut Quarterly*, I: 68–71.

out of the river between the island and the highway. Within a few years it passed in turn to Michael Spencer, William Williams and William Kelsey. From the latter Edward Grannis bought it in 1664, and the same year another island of the same extent was given to him by the town. It abutted on William Andrews's land, and is said to have been "compassed about" by the river. These two islands passed in 1671 to Samuel Burr, in 1674 to John Sadd, in 1715 to Daniel Messenger, in 1724 to Moses Merrill, in 1738 to Timothy Marsh and in 1741 to Joseph Forbs.[1] All these owners were interested in the tanning business, which, with the currying of leather, the manufacture of leather breeches and gloves, was carried on in that neighborhood throughout colonial times.

When the dam of Allyn and Bidwell was built, it made a mill-pond that extended some distance up stream. The embankment ran across to the lot originally granted to Governor Haynes. There Rev. Joseph Haynes had made a garden, enclosed with a fence. Mrs. Sarah Haynes brought suit for damages.[2] She eventually won, but the mill-pond remained. The tract involved is now occupied by the State Armory. Capitol Avenue was formerly called Oil Mill Lane. The land south of it was a pasture until about 1850. Rocky Hill Brook ran northward through it and emptied into the riveret. At the west end of the lane, there was a flaxseed oil-mill. There, in 1739, Nathaniel Hooker and Samuel Talcott secured liberty from the town to build a dam against "Butler's ten acres." The same year Jonathan Butler sold them the land. It adjoined the falls in the river, "a little above the flood" of Daniel Badger's mill-pond. The grinding of flaxseed was carried on here for years. A grist-mill was added before 1798. In 1819, this property was acquired by Samuel Ledlie, who sold to William H. Imlay. It was sometimes called "Imlay's Upper Mills." The Sharp's Rifle Manufacturing Company bought here in 1853. Such was the beginning of Hartford's present manufacturing district.

[1] *Original Distribution*, pp. 144, 242, 245, 388, 539; *Hartford Land Records*, 3: 19; 4: 162; 6: 208, 461.

[2] *State Archives: Private Controversies*, III: 67–73; *The Hartford Courant*, Nov. 6, 1909; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 292.

CHAPTER XIII

ANCIENT MEETING HOUSES

The First and Second churches of Hartford have been favored with historians, who have written after careful research. Yet the colonial history of the town would be incomplete without sketches of those meeting-houses that occupied the foreground of interest in their day. To convey to the reader a general impression of them, is, moreover, to our purpose, because each edifice was typical of the time in which it was erected, and stands now for a period in the town's development.

The first meeting-house of Hartford was perhaps begun by the pioneers in the spring of 1636. They were then anticipating the coming of Hooker's company, and would naturally wish to provide a place of worship before his arrival. The area they had reserved for public uses was called, in the entries of surrounding lots, "meeting house land," "meeting house lot," or "the meeting house yard." Perhaps they thought it might become necessary to surround this yard with a palisade, as planters did in other pioneer settlements. At its southeast bound, James Cole bought, at an early date, from Thomas Scott one rood of land, which is described as "lying by the meetinge houfe.' A lane led thence southward to the home-lots of their ministers, called the "chase way leading to the meeting house." It is thought, therefore, that this first place of worship was located in the southeastern section of the original square. Such, too, is the tradition. We have no description of it; but it is fair to assume that, in construction and shape, it was like other pioneer meeting-houses in New England. If so, we may think of it as a plain structure, built of logs, perhaps roughly squared, the chinks being filled with moss, or clay mixed with hay. The roof was thatched. Unglazed openings, provided with board shut-

ters, served for windows, and the door was of plank. Dedham's first meeting-house, erected in 1637, was 36 feet long, 20 feet wide and 12 feet high, from sill to plate; but that was used thirty-one years. Hartford's was a temporary structure, probably of that type and smaller size. As an estimate for purposes of comparison, a pioneer meeting-house 24 feet long, 16 feet wide and 10 feet high, would have been of liberal proportions. It might have had a wooden floor; but beaten earth was more likely. It was furnished with rough benches, on either side of a narrow passage. The men occupied one side and the women the other. At the end, an elevated enclosure served for a pulpit. Seats near the door were provided for the guard. It was certainly such a plain building, whatever its shape or size, for it was only a Puritan meeting-place, intended mainly to afford an opportunity for all to hear the Word of God, and capable of seating quite a company. To the assembly that gathered there, however, it was "none other than the house of God," made sacred by the sincerity of their religious aspirations and the public significance of their councils within its walls. If we assume that this meeting-house was in use until another was provided, it served the congregation for several years. It seems most likely to have been the "litle house in the Meeting house yard," which, on January 7, 1639–40, the townsmen received liberty to sell.[1] If so the plan failed, for, a few months later, William Spencer, in one of his last entries, made the record: "Its ordrd that the ould Meeting house shalbe given to m[r] Hooker."[2] We are to associate with this edifice all their early public assemblies. These included the general gatherings of the people, for civil as well as religious purposes. There, the Court, on February 21, 1636–7, christened the settlement "Harteford Towne." The following month they doubtless held there the first election of magistrates. On May 1, 1637, their General Court would have been assembled there, when they declared war against the Pequot Indians. It was there, ere their brave warriors embarked, that Thomas Hooker probably told them in a sermon that the savages "should be

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 11. [2] *Ibid*, I: 32.

bread for them."[1] They would have celebrated there also, on October 12, 1637, the first general Thanksgiving Day of the New England Colonies, and the earliest of record in Connecticut.[2] If we correctly interpret the town votes, and their first townsmen were chosen by the inhabitants of the North-side and South-side plantations in 1637, it was within these walls that the first organized town of Connecticut was prematurely born. In the spring of 1638, the committees and magistrates probably convened there to work out the democratic principles of their constitutional government. Most likely, too, Thomas Hooker preached there his famous sermon in May: and it was as picturesque a setting for the event as the cedars of Clark's Island for the Pilgrims, the old elm of Mattabesett for the settlers at Middletown, or the wide-spreading oak for the planters of New Haven. There they had certainly met that spring to confer with some Indian sachems, for John Higginson states that it was in an edifice later "Mr. Hooker's barn," their second meeting-house being "then not buylded." There is a record of some "costlets" that had been kept in this house, probably suspended from pegs in its walls, like ancient armor, which were, on April 5th, committed to Richard Lord, to "bee fitted vpp." They had been used in the Pequot War; and the Indians had these weighty reasons for the submission they yielded at the conference. These scenes — and many others which an artist, only, could portray — must have transpired within that first meeting-house.

It had become evident, however, in 1637, that they could anticipate a Colonial estate. A new era in their development was within their view, and it demanded expression in a meeting-house such as older communities in Massachusetts had already erected. Moreover, the town's inhabitants had increased. On any reasonable estimate of the size of their first edifice, it could not accommodate them. In his diary, Rev. Daniel Wadsworth records the fact that, when the second meeting-house was taken down,

[1] Mason's "*Brief History*" in Mather's *Early History of New England*, ed. 1864, p. 156. Cf. Numb. XIV: 9.

[2] Love's *Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England*, pp. 135, 136.

the date 1638 was found "upon y^e^ weather cock." [1] Other instances of such inscriptions are known. We have, however, no town votes concerning their plans or the initial steps in carrying them out. Such action was doubtless taken, and it may have been recorded in the plantation records, but, as these votes were not of "general concernment" when William Spencer transcribed the orders then in force into the town votes, they have not been preserved. This second meeting-house was located, says Dr. Hoadly, "upon a little rising ground on the east side of the present state house square." [2] The conveyance of a share in the brick school-house, in 1759, states that this building stood on "old Meeting House Hill," and near the dwelling-house of Captain John Lawrence. The former edifice is supposed to have been a little southeast of it. Its architecture was of a type early adopted in New England and prevailing throughout the century. Such meeting-houses were nearly or quite square, with a truncated pyramidal roof, having at its peak a "tower and turret." There were doors on three sides, the fourth being occupied by the pulpit. We have good reasons to believe that Hartford's meeting-house was fifty feet square, and it was of sufficient height to permit the erection of galleries.[3] It is proved by the records, hereafter cited, that the first meeting-house of the Second Church was of that size; that the second meeting-house of that congregation also was exactly the measurements of the First Church edifice, and that other Hartford meeting-houses, built about the same time, adopted those proportions in their ground plan. The material of that erected in 1638 was wood. There was a door on the north side, near which the guard sat on raised seats. As the pulpit

[1] Wadsworth's *Diary*, p. 12.

[2] "Some Account of the Early Meeting Houses of the First Church," by Dr. Charles J. Hoadly, in Appendix to *Sermons Preached by Rev. Leonard Bacon and Rev. Geo. Leon Walker, Feb. 27, 1879;* Rowland Swift in *Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary*, p. 144; *The Hartford Courant*, July 29, Nov. 30, Dec. 2, 1907; *The Hartford Times*, Aug. 17, Dec. 2, Dec. 4, 1907.

[3] New Haven's meeting-house, ordered in 1639, was "fifty foote square," and had a pyramidal roof (New Haven Col. Rec., I: 25, 145). Northampton's, built in 1661–1664, was forty feet square. That of Springfield, contracted for in 1645, was forty feet long, twenty-five feet wide and nine feet high. It had two turrets, one for a bell and the other for a watch-house.

The Meeting House of 1698

was on the west side, the main entrance was doubtless on the east, according to custom. This was the natural front at that time. Probably there was also a door on the south side. There was a window on either side of each door. These were small. Their two narrow window-sashes, hung on hinges at the sides and opening in the middle, were glazed with lozenge-shaped panes of glass, set in lead. The cost of this meeting-house when completed, judging by the experience of New Haven, must have been considerable. It was not the custom in that day, however, to complete new meeting-houses at once. The work usually lingered for some years, and additional features were added as the inhabitants could afford the expense. This was the case in Hartford. Probably their edifice was sufficiently advanced so that it was occupied during the winter of 1638–9, and they met there to adopt their first Constitution. Of the work's progress, we have several hints in the records. On April 11, 1639, the ringing of their bell is mentioned. This they had brought from Cambridge. The town agreed, on October 28, 1640, with Stephen Post, at 5s. 6d. per hundred, to hew, plane and lay the clapboards. One addition to their original design had been ordered a few months earlier. It was the construction of an enclosed porch, covering, as the custom was, the front doorway. In the author's opinion, this porch projected in front of the edifice. Over such porches a chamber was usually built, called a "porch-chamber." As now, with dormer windows, it furnished light and a convenient egress from the interior of the second floor. This empty space above a church auditorium, was called "the meeting house chamber." Springfield's church had, at first, only the joists for one; but, in 1649, John Pynchon agreed to "make a chamber over the meeting house and board it," provided he could have the use of it for ten years. There he stored his corn.[1] A stairway — usually in the porch or near the door — afforded access to such chambers. Hartford's meeting-house had apparently a floor above. It seems to have occurred to some, to add the porch and, through a chamber above it, to provide for the use of the second floor. How

[1] Burt's *History of Springfield*, I: 200.

much of the interior space above the auditorium was included in this chamber, we do not know, but sufficient to make a room of convenient size for ordinary uses. As, according to the records, it was situated directly over the church gallery, it must have included some interior space, and, if we may suppose that the porch was ten feet square as some were — as much, or more, taken from the interior, would have made a room of considerable size. This chamber was used in early times as an arsenal. A room in the Second Church was put later to the same use. There was no fire in either place to endanger a supply of gunpowder. This was the "Court Chamber" mentioned in later records. It was used by the upper house after the General Assembly had been divided, and was accustomed to convene in the meeting-house. They also called it the "Council Chamber." Here the smaller courts of the time may have held some of their sessions. Some time was occupied in completing this porch, but, as its construction did not interfere with the use of the auditorium, it could be done at their leisure.[1] The seating of this meeting-house, according to the customs of those days, was ordered March 13, 1640–41. By that date, seats must have been provided and order established within. Henry Packs, in his will, dated September 4, 1640, bequeathed to the church a clock, but, so far as known, it was never used in their meeting-house.[2] That would have been quite contrary to the customs of the time. Ministers then used hour-glasses, but gave little heed to them.

This meeting-house had not been in use many years before it was found to be too small. The population had increased. Had it not been for emigrations to other towns, they would have been compelled to build anew before the Second Church was formed. This condition was met by a vote to build, with convenient speed, a gallery. In 1643, the town had voted to discipline any boy, who was mis-

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 39, 46.

[2] Manwaring's *Hartford Probate Records*, I: 29. In 1654 an inventory of the town's property has "The towne Clock at good Prats." It had in 1657 "A clock at John Allyns." *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 106, 119. The clock in the steeple of the third meeting-house was provided by public subscription in 1752. Russell's *Hist. of Christ Church*, I: 62 n.

behaving "at the tim of publik exorcies ether in the mitting howse or about the wales without." Perhaps the insufficient room for them within, or the need of a suitable place for them to sit, was one reason for the immediate erection of this south gallery, afterwards assigned to the boys. There, they were watched by the tithing-man.[1] In 1660, they voted to build a gallery on the east side. They also voted, in 1664, to erect a gallery "for the inlargment of the Rume." This was doubtless on the north side and completed this improvement. Evidently the height of the walls had been greater than in some buildings to permit of such galleries. It may have been sixteen or eighteen feet, which was a liberal dimension. Repairs were made upon this edifice from time to time. The east side was newly shingled in 1660, and the south and west sides in 1667. At the latter date "necessary Lights for the Gallery" were ordered, altering the exterior appearance by the addition of small second story windows. The roof was newly covered in 1687, with cedar shingles, which, says Dr. Hoadly, they sought liberty to obtain in Fitz John Winthrop's swamp, between Haddam and Saybrook. In 1699, new window casements were needed. In 1704, underpinning, ground sills and clapboards were provided. At that time, William Davenport laid a new oak plank floor in the turret, "calking and pitching" it, and set up "the speere & vain." The year before, the pulpit had been furnished with a "Plush Cushin, a greene Cloth, and Silke for the fringes and Tasseles of s^{d} Cushion," at a cost of £2. 14s. 6d. sterling.[2] In 1725, the bell was broken. The town finally decided to have it recast in England, with as much, or more, weight of metal added. The cost was £85, of which the First Society paid £47. 5s. 9d., and the Second Society £37. 14s. 3d. — a fair representation of their relative wealth at the time.[3] This bell being out of use in 1726, John Edwards was directed to purchase some suitable red bunting for a flag to be set up on the State House, "to direct for meeting upon public

[1] *Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary*, pp. 147, 148.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 147.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 151; *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 49, 51, 52.

worship of God." [1] The breaking of the old "town bell" must have awakened in some recollections of the past. It had voiced the summons of their meeting-house so long, that a babe who heard its last peal might have been the great-grandchild of one who heard its first. So, generations had come and gone in that century of struggle with the wilderness and the Indians, and not a little, also, with "the world, the flesh and the devil." Their meeting-house, had been the symbol of that period — small, unadorned, substantial. It was fitting that the old bell should ring out its dying peal and be broken. When it was returned from England, it gave forth a new and a fuller note.

The awakening of interest at this time in the building of a new meeting-house, can hardly be regarded as a mere coincidence. To be sure, their present edifice was small and old, but for many years, that of the Second Church had relieved the congestion of attendance. In fact, it did serve them until 1737. We must turn back to the time when the church was divided, to remind the reader that in 1670, as well as for years before that and years afterwards, Hartford was a dual community and had maintained its unity under a virtual treaty, by which the North-side and the South-side inhabitants shared equally in its government. The doctrinal and ecclesiastical issues of the controversy in the First Church cannot be minimized. It was not greatly to the disparagement of either party that differences should arise in Hartford, for the same issues were in discussion elsewhere. This dual community life, however, apparently offered the disputants every advantage for creating a division. This was especially true in the later stages of the controversy, when Rev. Joseph Haynes, the son of a North-side settler, and Rev. John Whiting, the son of a South-side settler, came into open conflict. In most ecclesiastical disputes, there are elements that are not discussed in the council's minutes. We suspect that this was true of the controversy that finally resulted in the formation of the Second Church, February 12, 1669–70, most of

[1] The selectmen of Plymouth, in 1697, were directed to "procure a flagg to be put out at the ringing of the first bell and taken in when the last bell was rung." In some places a flag was used to commence the time of worship.

whose founders were South-side inhabitants and followed Rev. John Whiting.

This action had been taken, pursuant to the vote of the General Court in October 1669, recommending to the First Church a course favorable to it, in default of which the withdrawing members were permitted "to release and releiue themselves, without offense to the Courte." We do not know of any favorable action by the mother church. The vote of the Court was not carried by any encouraging majority, four assistants and fourteen deputies dissenting.[1] The old law concerning the maintenance of ministers, which was originally framed by the Commissioners of the United Colonies, did not then contemplate the support of two churches within a town.[2] Provision was made, therefore, at a town meeting in 1670, for the salary of Mr. Haynes alone. It happened, however, that relief was soon afforded by the revision of the laws, ordered in May 1671 and approved in October 1672. Therein it was provided that, where there was more than one congregation in a town, "all persons shall contribute to one or both of those Societies within their township." [3] This allowed the new church to pay rates for the maintenance of Mr. Whiting and his ministry. In the will of Deacon George Grave, dated September 17, 1673, he specified that his lands should "pay their rates, according to their proportion, to the Maintenance of the Ministree at the new meeting house." Sergeant Joseph Nash in 1675 did the same. At the beginning, however, the Second Church labored under a great disadvantage.

Another problem was presented to them in the erection of their meeting-house. No public land could be secured without the town's consent, and there is no record of such a vote. Nor did their Society then have such corporate existence as was necessary for them to hold real estate. There was no other course than for them to build on private property. The commercial interests of the South-side being then largely near the southern end of the bridge, the lot that had originally belonged to Andrew Bacon was selected.

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 120. [2] *Ibid.*, I: 111, 112, 545.
[3] *Ibid.*, II: 153, 154, 160, 176, 190, 290; *Laws of 1672*, title page and p. 52.

This had been recorded to William Warren in 1664, under an agreement made the year before with Andrew Bacon and his nephew, Nathaniel Bacon, whereby payment was to be made in six annual installments, ending April 1, 1670.[1] William Warren was a member of the new congregation. At all events, the northern part of this lot, comprising about one and a quarter acres, with a dwelling-house and other buildings, passed to Lieutenant Thomas Bull. He did not buy this for a homestead, and we have found no evidence that he ever lived there. Nor was this lot recorded to him. In 1670, or within a few years, he certainly acquired it. There was no record to inform the curious that Warren had sold it, or, if he had, who the purchaser was. This lot was bounded west by Main Street and north by our present Sheldon Street. The land south of it was sold, in 1684, by Nathaniel Bacon to Richard Burnham, whose house and blacksmith shop were located there until 1738. Lieutenant Bull in 1682, by deed of gift conveyed his lot to his son, Major Jonathan Bull, who married in 1684, Sarah, the daughter of Rev. John Whiting. In his will, also, executed in 1684, Lieutenant Bull bequeathed to his son "my [his] Lott and House that I [he] bought of William Warren neare the New Meeting hous in Hartford." On this lot therefore owned at the time by Lieutenant Bull, the first meeting-house of the Second Church was built. It seems probable that the congregation worshipped in the dwelling-house until their edifice was completed. The meeting-house was south of this dwelling, and the land upon which it stood was never recorded to that Society. The truth appears to have been that, since the new congregation could not otherwise secure a site, Lieutenant Thomas Bull took the new meeting-house under his protection, and bequeathed the trust to his son Major Jonathan Bull, from whom it descended to Dr. Jonathan Bull. It is partly through a conveyance made by Sarah, the widow of Major Jonathan, that we obtain an acquaintance with this meeting-house. She obtained liberty from the General Assembly in 1705 "to make a sale of a small parcel of land in Hartford, not

[1] *Original Distribution*, p. 553; *State Archives: Private Controversies*, I: 121–123; *Probate Records, Book III, County Court*, March 5, 1673–4.

exceeding fifteen foot in breadth and fiftie foot in length for the accomodation of the making some inlargement to the south meeting house in said town," in which sale, as administratrix, she was to act, on the advice of Major William Whiting. She conveyed, therefore, to Nathaniel Stanley, Richard Lord, Thomas Bunce, John Marsh and all others of the "Congregation of the Society of the South meeting house," 516 square feet of her home-lot, being 50 feet and 4 inches in length and 10 feet and 3 inches in breadth throughout. This strip of land was bounded by the meeting-house on the north, her own home-lot on the south and east, and the street on the west.[1] That she sold four inches more in length than she was authorized to do, undoubtedly indicates that it was necessary in order to extend the strip to the east end of the edifice. As the addition was for "some inlargement," we conjecture that the design was to build an outside porch on the south side of the edifice and erect stairs to galleries within. If this explanation is correct, this meeting-house, which we shall see was fifty feet square and doubtless had a pyramidal roof, would have been when completed similar to that of the First Church. Under the circumstances, this was a natural proceeding. There is no evidence in the land records that the above strip of land was ever conveyed by the Second Society.

The ownership of the site of this meeting-house was in dispute, when the edifice was abandoned in 1755, from which we learn its exact size. A vote was then passed by the Society, empowering the committee "to Sell the Old Meeting Houfe and Leafe the Land belonging thereto for Nine Hundred and Ninety nine years to the higheft Bidder." [2] To this, Jonathan Bull objected. He claimed to own, by right of inheritance, the fee in this property. Consequently, a suit was brought in the County Court in 1756, known as Jonathan Bull vs. Ebenezer Benton, Jonathan Seymour et al. The writ describes this property as "being about fifty feet Square, Bounded Weftwardly by the Town Street or Country Road, Southerly by land formerly appro-

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, IV: 512; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 397.

[2] "Seymour Papers," in *Boardman Collection*, State Library, No. 5631. See also Nos. 5632, 5633.

priated to accommodate the South Meeting Houfe so called in the firft Parifh in said Hartford," and on all other sides by land of the plaintiff.[1] The land herein mentioned as on the south was the strip above referred to, hence the meeting-house site was fifty feet square. The defendants contended that this land had belonged to the inhabitants, the Society having acquired from them an ownership by occupation. Thomas Warren, aged 82 or 83, testified to attending meeting there as a boy with his father, and declared that the meeting-house was built on land that was once his father's; nor had he ever heard of any person that laid claim to the land on which the meeting-house stood. He and Widow Hannah Olcott, aged about 92 years, also testified that the land had laid open to the street ever since they could remember. It is evident that the South Society had forgotten, if any of those then living ever knew, the facts concerning the location of their first meeting-house. This case was tried in the County Court in January 1757.[2] The jury rendered a verdict for the defendants, from which the plaintiff appealed to the Superior Court. Upon a final review of the case, this verdict was reversed, and the plaintiff recovered possession of the lot, with damages and costs.[3]

We have, thus, sufficient evidence to determine the type of this meeting-house. It was doubtless patterned after that of the First Church, erected in 1638, and of the same size. In general appearance it was similar after the erection of the porch about 1705, which the street on the west made it necessary to place on the south side. It stood on Main Street, near the residence recently owned by Hon. Henry C. Robinson. Probably this edifice was begun about 1670. James Ensign, in his will executed November 23, 1670, bequeathed £6 "towards the building of the new meeting house." The will of Deacon Grave in 1673, intimates that it was then completed and in use. In 1719, the Society was permitted by the town to erect horse sheds 10 feet wide and 80 feet. long at the end of the school-house, nearly opposite in the highway.

[1] *Superior Court Papers*, September Term 1757, State Library.
[2] *County Court Records*, Vol. T, January term 1757, case 20.
[3] *Superior Court Records*, Vol. 12, March and September terms, 1757.

Few, if any, congregations of that day had endured more from courts and councils in order to attain such a consummation of their desires. We know of none that seemed to hold their minister in higher esteem. Within the first fifteen years of the church's history, no less than ten of his loyal supporters made bequests to him in their wills, perhaps in recognition of his loss those early years when the town withdrew its support.[1] So the Second Church of Christ in Hartford, which Major James Richards termed, in 1680, the "South Church," entered into the privileges of its sanctuary, named in the earliest records "the new meeting house" and "the meeting house of the South side of the Riveret."[2]

Thus it happened that the "Town Bell," which had hung so long in the tower of the First Church meeting-house, had for more than half a century summoned the worshippers of both congregations. The recasting of it was regarded as the town's duty, in which both societies ought to share. The matter was referred to a committee representing both bodies. It was under consideration for several months. As both churches then needed new meeting-houses, this conference became the occasion out of which the proposition arose to reunite the two churches. In 1726, the First Society voted that such a union would be better for the town and the "honorable support of the ministry." A committee was named to propose the same to the "new church." The plan failed, however, to receive sufficient favor from that body to warrant further consideration. It was altogether unlikely that a new meeting-house could be

[1] These bequests were: James Ensign, 1670, £5; Christian, wife of Benjamin Harbert, 1670, three acres of land; Gregory Wolterton, 1674, £5; John Bidwell, Sen., 1683, 20 s.; Major James Richards, 1680, £15; Justes Banbury, 1672, 20 s.; Captain Thomas Watts, 1683, £20; Elder John White, 1683, £5; Thomas Hosmer, 1685, £5; Lieutenant Thomas Bull, 1684, £3.

[2] Gregory Wolterton wrote his own will. His use of the phrase "South side of the Riveret" in 1674 is significant. The most common early designation is "New Meeting House." On the title page of Rev. John Whiting's election sermon, printed in 1686, he is called "Pastor of the Second Church of Christ in Hartford." The caption of Rev. Thomas Buckingham's early records, made after 1694, has "Second Church in Hartford," but whether this phrase was copied from Rev. John Whiting's record is uncertain. The *Town Votes* speak of "the second church now in Hartford" in 1684. Mrs. Bull probably used the common designation in 1705—"South Meeting House." In deeds "South Ecclesiastical Society" appears in 1755, "South Society" in 1765 and "Second Ecclesiastical Society" in 1774.

located south of the riveret satisfactorily to both churches, and the South-side was too nearly equal to the North-side in inhabitants and wealth to surrender the privileges it had so long enjoyed.

There is evidence of the force of such considerations in the protracted controversy the First Society had in locating its own meeting-house.[1] After eleven years, the possibilities of further discussion being exhausted, the southeast corner of the burying-ground was selected. The original vote of 1734 contemplated a brick edifice seventy feet long and forty-six feet wide, the exact dimensions of Northampton's meeting-house, erected the same year. The length was afterwards reduced to sixty-six feet, and wood was substituted for brick. "This house stood," says Dr. Walker, "sidewise to the street, its steeple on the north end. There was a door at the south end, another on the east side and another under the steeple on the north. The pulpit was on the west side, and, over it, a sounding board, and behind it a curtain." There were two rows of windows, set with small rectangular panes of glass, the lower sash, at least, being hung on weights. The "Great Alley" ran from the east door to the pulpit, and another, it is said, crossed it from north to south. Uncushioned slips occupied the floor and gallery space, excepting a few more pretentious pews on either side of the high pulpit, which increased in number as the century advanced. "The tower," says Mr. Rowland Swift, "elevated the bell turret a full story at least above the ridge pole — the spire still rising high above this with its lofty pole and gilded ball and weathercock." On July 31, 1737, Rev. Daniel Wadsworth preached his last sermon in the old meeting-house. Its destruction was begun the following week, the pulpit, seats and bell being removed. Some of its timbers are said to be in the present edifice. The congregation met in the State House August

[1] Dr. Walker's *History of the First Church*, pp. 278–289; *Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary*, pp. 151–158. These volumes are authorities on the second meeting-house. See also "Some Account of the Early Meeting Houses of the First Church," by Dr. Charles J. Hoadly, in Appendix to *Sermons Preached by Rev. Leonard Bacon and Rev. Geo. Leon Walker, Feb. 27, 1879; Wadsworth's Diary*, pp. 25, 28; *The Hartford Times*, Aug. 17, Dec. 2 and 4, 1907; *The Hartford Courant*, July 29, Nov. 30 and Dec. 2, 1907.

7th, and there conducted worship until December 30, 1739, when their third meeting-house was dedicated. On that occasion, Mr. Wadsworth preached his only published sermon, entitled, "Christ's Presence the Glory of an House of Publick Worship," printed at New London in 1740.

There was a great similarity among the meeting-houses erected in New England about the middle of the eighteenth century, especially in the Connecticut valley. Their dimensions, interior arrangement and architecture varied little. Doors were placed as the convenience of the location suggested. It is said that a plan of this meeting-house had been prepared by Mr. Cotton Palmer of Warwick, R. I., who received one pound for the service and his advice. He was not an architect, as that term is now used, but a builder. Probably he had merely a draft of this edifice, and obtained his ideas and measurements from some early builder's companion.

Ten years after the dedication of this edifice the Second Church decided to erect a new meeting-house. The matter had been determined before the January session of the County Court, 1749–50, when that authority was asked to fix a site. The Court appointed Colonel Elizur Goodrich and Hezekiah May of Wethersfield, and Captain Jonathan Hills of East Hartford, to view the premises, notify and hear all parties and report to it. A site was fixed at the July session, but it was not approved by the Society. It was "in the highway that comes from the westward," now Buckingham Street. The southeast corner of the meeting-house was to be about two rods north of the northeast corner of Joseph Buckingham's house-lot, on which the present church stands.[1] As the Society had voted to erect a building "sixty-six feet in length and forty-six feet in breadth"— the exact size of the First Society meeting-house — the highway would be almost closed. Only about two rods were left at each end. The space on the north was in the winter and spring covered with ice or flooded, so as to be impassable. On the south, it was claimed, the highway was much used for carting hay, corn and wood. There was also "a considerable run of water" coming along Main

[1] *County Court Records*, Vol. S., July, 1750.

Street, which would run under the meeting-house. This was the brook mentioned in deeds of that time. The ground, too, it was thought, would endanger the foundations. Thus the project encountered obstacles that delayed it for two years. On May 20, 1752, the "Inhabitants of the Second Society" petitioned the General Assembly for a new location. The committee recited the facts, stated the proposed size of their edifice, and admitted that it was made larger than the Society required because the two societies often had occasion to meet together.[1] The Assembly appointed a new committee, upon whose report the site was fixed. It was about thirty feet east of the former, two-thirds of the building being in Main Street.[2] It stood the longest way north and south. The bell tower measured 16 feet. It was in the center, at the north end. There was an entrance through it into the church, almost in line with the west sidewalk. There were also doors in the center on the east and south sides. The pulpit was on the west.[3] In the interior, the arrangement was quite similar to the First Church meeting-house. This edifice was begun, as Dr. Parker discovered in the "Memorandum Book" of Thomas Seymour, "in the fore part of the year of our Lord, 1752, was three years in building, and finished about the latter end of the year 1754."[4] It was occupied by the congregation January 5, 1755, but, on December 2nd, Rev. George Whitefield preached in it the first sermon. So far as it is possible to make a comparison between the meeting-houses of the First and Second churches, the main feature in which they differed was their spires. In 1737 the First Church had invited the Second to contribute towards a steeple where the town bell could be hung — probably without results. It then ordered its committee to do the work. The contract with Mr. Palmer was for £250, but there were additional expenses. They paid Eben Sedgwick £9. 15 s. for the spire pole. To Seth Young they paid £52. 13 s. 6 d. for a gilded brass cock and ball, which adorned its summit. As the base of the tower measured fourteen feet, the above details

[1] *State Archives: Ecclesiastical*, IX: 19–22.

[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, X: 96, 106. [3] *The Hartford Times*, March 18, 1891.

[4] Dr. Parker's *History of the Second Church*, pp. 120–123; "Seymour Papers" in *Boardman Collection*, State Library, No. 5630 ff.

may indicate that its spire was patterned more after that slender and tall type, which some of the meeting-houses of that day had. The Second Church edifice is described by a traveller in 1807 as "of wood, alike unornamented within and without, and when filled there was still presented to the eye nothing but what had the plainest appearance." [1] Its steeple was erected by a subscription of sixteen men, amounting to £465. At its base the tower was two feet larger than that of the First Church edifice. The spire was more of the conventional type.[2] In this feature, the meeting-houses of that period usually displayed the taste and wealth of the congregation.

These were not the only meeting-houses erected in Hartford during the colonial period. One was built on the East-side in 1699. It was probably one of the small square edifices, which continued in fashion into the next century. Its location was on a low hill where the South Meadow Road diverges from Main Street. This stood until 1735. Its successor was erected about the same time as the First Church meeting-house. The dimensions were exactly the same. It had no steeple. In 1754 it was painted.[3] A meeting-house was built by the West Society in or about 1712 and stood diagonally across the highway from the present church. It also was probably a small barn-like building. North of this, at the same corner its successor was erected in 1742–1744. This followed the type then prevailing in the town. The third meeting-house of the West Society was built in 1834 and is the present town hall.[4]

That there were no other churches in Hartford about the middle of the eighteenth century, does not indicate entire unanimity of religious faith. In 1745, John Tiley

[1] *Kendall's Travels*, I: 4.

[2] The Wadsworth Athenaeum has an old oil painting, the colors of which are much dimmed, which shows the spire of the Second Church meeting-house. It is said to have been formerly in the possession of the Pond family. As this edifice was torn down in 1828, and the picture also shows the spire of the present First Church meeting-house, erected in 1807–1808, the painting was executed between those dates. A writer in the "Old Days in Hartford" articles, No. 27, *Connecticut Post*, refers to this or a similar painting as giving the view from Lord's Hill in 1818 and states that it was painted by Waldo.

[3] Goodwin's *Hist. of East Hartford*, pp. 129, 130.

[4] *The Hartford Courant*, May 19, 1913.

declared himself as a Baptist. He had been a member of Elder Stephen Gorton's church in New London since 1726, and had sometimes been there to worship.[1] John Bolles, called the father of the denomination in Hartford, attended church in Suffield before 1789. He and others then formed a church. It is said that their first meeting for worship was held in the home of John Bolles. A meeting-house was erected about 1794, on the corner of Market and Temple streets. There were Methodists in Hartford as early as 1789, but no meeting-house until 1821. The year before, services had been held in the old Court House on Church Street. A few merchants or traders of the Jewish faith were occasional residents of Hartford in colonial times. There were Roman Catholics, also, before 1781, when Abbé Robin, chaplain of the French troops, celebrated mass in their encampment. Neither had any stated place of worship. About the middle of the eighteenth century, there were a number of families in Hartford that had affiliations with the Church of England. These had so increased in number and strength that, after 1762, occasional services were held. Land for a church was purchased, and there was a parochial organization. The first administration of the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the Court House in 1766. This early movement declined during the Revolutionary War. Adherents were then in fellowship with the church in Middletown. The interest was revived in 1786. Their first church was built in 1792, on the north corner of Church and Main streets.[2]

It must be admitted that Hartford was no exception to the rule of colonial times, in showing intolerance toward dissenters from the established order, especially when they violated the laws. Some such were confined from time to time in Hartford's jail. There were others, however, of good religious standing in the community, who worshipped reverently in its Puritan congregations, because there was no church in the town according to their faith. Their dissent was doubtless known, but, in the general esteem for their characters, it was overlooked.

[1] *State Archives: Ecclesiastical*, X: 312, 313.

[2] See Dr. Russell's *History of the Parish of Christ Church.*

CHAPTER XIV

SOME PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The places where the founders of a town or commonwealth were accustomed to meet in early times, have ever afterwards a public interest. If there was a rude log hut erected within the palisado by the pioneers of 1635, that was the town's first public building. In 1636, the meeting-house became the place for assemblies and continued to be such for some years. It is not so likely, as it seems to the writer, that all their general or particular courts in early times were held there. That was not in accordance with their custom in old England; nor would it have suited their convenience. The story is told that an Indian was hired to seek a lost horse, which its English owners had sought in vain. He dashed off into the forest and quickly found it feeding in a well-watered intervale. When he was asked for an explanation of his ready success, he replied: "I just thought what I would do, if I were a horse." Their courts for some years had comparatively few members. If the reader had been one of them, he certainly would have suggested some more comfortable place of assembly than a cold meeting-house in mid-winter. In England, courts of that time were frequently convened at inns, and are sometimes to this day. At the inn, members could stable their horses and find lodgings and entertainment for themselves. The hall was a suitable meeting place. It seems very likely that the settlers convened their courts in such inns, as soon as suitable ones were established. Such is the indication of the records. On June 3, 1644, the General Court, after rehearsing the need of such inns or ordinaries in the Colony, passed an order requiring each town to provide one. We have no hint of any inn in Hartford before this date. At the same meeting, John Steele, Andrew Bacon and James Boosey were appointed a committee to secure "some conuenient

Tables & a Carpet, £ 1. 10 s.," "One doz. of joynt stools & a forme, £1. 10 s.," and "2 leather chayres & 4 other chayres, £1. 10 s." At that time, the inn and its land were owned by the Colony, the mortgage having been foreclosed January 14, 1680–81. In 1684, a committee was appointed to sell the property, "according as they shall judg most advantageous for the country." On December 2, 1685, it was conveyed to Zachary Sandford, grandson of the former host.[1] That this inn continued for some years, as formerly, to be a place for court assemblies, is unquestioned. The "court chamber" had become the recognized center of all judicial proceedings, and Sergeant Sandford was a worthy host. He is said to have made additions to the house. At the Court's special meeting, March 30, 1687, a committee was appointed "to agree with our [their] landlord Sanford for the payment of what the country is indebted to him."

Here, one of Hartford's historic scenes was enacted. It was on the 31st of October, 1687, that Governor Edmund Andros reached Hartford, in the hope of receiving the surrender of Connecticut's charter. He would have stopped at the inn, where the General Court was then convened. There was some conference concerning the matter in the "court chamber." Trumbull says: "The important affair was debated and kept in suspense, until the evening, when the charter was brought and laid upon the table, where the assembly were sitting. By this time, great numbers of the people were assembled, and men sufficiently bold to enterprise whatever might be necessary or expedient. The lights were instantly extinguished, and one Captain Wadsworth, of Hartford, in the most silent and secret manner, carried off the charter, and secreted it in a large hollow tree, fronting the house of the Hon. Samuel Wyllys, then one of the magistrates of the colony. The people appeared all peaceable and orderly. The candles were officiously re-lighted; but the patent was gone, and no discovery could be made of it, or the person who had conveyed it away." Such was the story in his day. The tree was known in colonial times, and in 1780 esteemed sacred as that in which the charter

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 145, 172; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 95.

The Stuart Homestead and the Charter Oak

was concealed.[1] There is a tradition that, long before the coming of the English, the Indians were accustomed to hold their councils underneath its wide-spreading branches, and plant their crops when it put forth its leaves in the spring. Its age at its fall was computed by competent authority as nearly a thousand years. This famous tree stood on the estate that was owned and occupied by the Wyllys family for nearly two centuries. In 1823, it passed from the heirs of George Wyllys to Stephen Bulkeley, who built there one of those stately mansions, which formerly graced the streets of Hartford. He is said to have used much of the ancient frame of the Wyllys mansion. This property passed to Mr. Bulkeley's son-in-law, Hon. Isaac W. Stuart. The sacred oak fell August 21, 1856. The next day, it was the subject of several early photographs taken by N. A. Moore of Hartford, which are now in the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society.

How long Sandford's inn continued to be used for such courts, must be left to conjecture. An order of October 1689, notes the meeting of the assistants "in the court chamber" to canvas the nominations of the towns. Probably the Governor and Council, empowered in 1692 to act for the General Court between its sessions, and other smaller bodies, continued to meet there for some time. Sandford had a bill against the Governor in 1704, for "expenses in his house." It was paid by the Colony. He had apparently made over the greater part of his household goods to his son-in-law, Jonathan Bunce, before 1710, when he made his will. In this, he mentions "the jury chamber." His inventory, taken in 1713, does not refer to the court furniture. Jonathan Bunce died in 1717. His inventory mentions "A Long Table & Foarm," probably once owned by Jeremy Adams or Zachary Sandford. "In y^{e} Jury Chamber" there were "Four Turkey work chairs," but the apartment was furnished as a bedroom. "In y^{e} Court chamber" there were "A Long Table," "a fmall Do," "A Turkey Work Carpett,"

[1] Trumbull's *History*, I: 371; Hoadly's *The Hiding of the Charter;* Stuart's *History of the Charter Oak*, MS. in collections of the Conn. Hist. Soc.; Twitchell's *Hartford in History*, pp. 99 ff.; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 63 ff.; *Conn. as a Colony*, I: 247 ff. On the Charter Oak tree, see *The Hartford Courant*, Oct. 29, Nov. 2, 5 and 19, 1907, April 19, 1914; *The Hartford Times*, Aug. 18, 1906.

"Six chairs & 4 cushions." The contents of this room suggest that it was then used largely for storage purposes. As there was a "jury chamber," we may infer that this inn had been generally used for trials.

A new era had come, however, for the General Court. Its size had increased. In October 1698, it was ordered that thereafter it was to consist of two houses.[1] The same session introduced the roll call of deputies. Thereafter, it was termed in the records the "General Assembly." In the author's opinion, it was about that time that the Assembly, having outgrown the inn, began to convene regularly in the meeting-house. The upper house then used the porch chamber, which was of sufficient size for that body, the lower house using the auditorium of the church on the first floor. It is noted in connection with the meeting of the Court of Assistants, May 12, 1708, that a constable was charged to go with the jury "to a room appointed" and remain by themselves, until they had agreed on a verdict. On May 27th, Joseph Wadsworth was before this court, for using improper language to Ichabod Wells, the sheriff, "he the said Wadsworth being in the Gallery of the Meeting house in Hartford, under the Court Chamber where the Governor and Council were sitting." [2] These quarters at length became unsatisfactory to some of the Assembly. In 1712, the meeting-house was nearly seventy-five years old. That year, at its May session, the upper house numbered eleven and the lower house sixty-five. On the 14th of that month, Governor Gurdon Saltonstall made certain proposals to that body, the last of which was as follows: "What provision may be requsite to be made, in the present want of a suitable house for the holding our General Assemblies." It was referred to a committee, which thought there should be court-houses in each county, "but more especially at Hartford and New Haven, for holding the General Assemblies." Action was deferred by the lower house. At the same session, it was voted to sell certain country lands and use the proceeds "to the building a publick house or houses for the use of

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, IV: 267, 282, 284.
[2] *Records of Court of Assistants*, II: 95.

the Assembly and other courts." [1] Objections to this plan arose, and nothing came of it for some years. The Council voted, therefore, in 1715, to "repair the court chamber in the first meeting house at Hartford, so as may be safe for the courts to be held in the same, at the Colony's charge."[2] This was the porch chamber in which the upper house convened. Thus they managed until 1718, when the proposal for a court-house was adroitly coupled with a plan for the encouragement of Yale College and its final location in New Haven.[3] The amount appropriated for the former purpose was five hundred pounds, which was eventually secured from the sale of lands in Stafford, Voluntown, New Milford and Danbury. On October 28, 1718, the Governor and Council appointed a building committee, consisting of William Pitkin, Esq., Joseph Talcott, Esq., and Captain Aaron Cook. Their design, as approved by the Council on March 11th following, gives a good description of this proposed building, then called a "State House."

"This board are of opinion that a house of seventy-two feet long, thirty broad, twenty-four between joints, with a range of pillars under the middle of the beams of the chamber floor, a door on each side, and at each end, a staircase at the south-west and another at the south-east corner, two chambers of thirty foot long at each end, one for the Council and another for Representatives, with a space of twelve foot between the two houses, and a staircase into the garrets, and on the other side a lobby to the Council chamber, will well serve the occasions designed by the Assembly, and answer their expectation in the grant aforesaid." [4]

This building, the Assembly at its October session, ordered the committee to erect with all speed. The length was apparently altered to seventy feet. Two hundred and fifty pounds were taxed on Hartford County, in February 1719–20, toward finishing the building, and the balance was paid by the public treasury.[5] According to the same proportion, the Colony and County bore the expenses of repairs in 1732, and also in 1735, when shutters were pro-

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, V: 325, 333.
[2] *Ibid.*, V: 493, 512.
[3] *Ibid.*, VI: 35 36,8, 3, 84.
[4] *Ibid.*, VI: 91, 102.
[5] *Ibid.*, VI: 157, 158.

vided for the lower windows to prevent the breakage of glass. The building once had a cupola, but it was never restored after a fire, which threatened the entire edifice in 1783. This fire was occasioned by its illumination, or by fireworks at the peace celebration.

Although this building was at first called the "State House," after a few years, the more common designation became "Court House," especially in later advertisements. It stood in the square, in front of the present City Hall. In 1796, it was sold to make room for the new State House, and was moved to the rear of Christ Church. There it remained for many years, being owned by the trustees of the estate of Ebenezer Clark. It was occupied at sundry times, wrote Dr. Gurdon W. Russell, as a tenement house, a school taught by George J. Patten, where the late Mr. Henry Keney was once a pupil; a shop in which Charles Hosmer printed an edition of Scott's Bible; the place where the Methodists worshipped, before their church on Trumbull Street was built, and a factory where Force and Goodnow made carriages and William R. Loomis shaped saddle-trees by machinery, the power being a horse in the cellar.[1] The parish of Christ Church bought the property in 1833; and part of the building was sold to Messrs E. B. Pratt and G. H. Hart, who removed it to a location in the rear of Nos. 185 and 187 Pearl Street. There, Robert Walker, and later Preston and Kenyon, had a paint shop. It was torn down in 1910, after a life of nearly two centuries, to make way for the telephone company's building.

The most historic public building of Hartford that has been intrusted to present and future generations, and the choicest example of earlier architecture, is the State House, completed in 1796. It is a memorial of the city's incorporation, and the result of its early enterprise, as elsewhere related. At the beginning of its history, the City of Hartford having been aroused to an interest in its municipal privileges and responsibilities, determined to secure the erection of a state house, which should be worthy of honor among its citizens. The best legacy that colonial times

[1] *The Hartford Times*, Nov. 17, 1904, May 25, 1907; *The Hartford Courant*, Nov. 2, 1910; *Geer's Directory*, 1879.

THE STATE HOUSE OF 1719

in their passing away could have left to those who will inhabit the city two centuries hence, is such a building. In accepting it for city uses, Hartford has taken a moral responsibility to preserve an edifice that has been made famous by the State and is consecrated by the labors of her citizens.[1] This building, consecrated anew as the throbbing heart of Hartford's municipal life, will receive great praise in that day when cities realize the dream of the prophets; and the place of a man's birth, whatever his race, will quicken his pride and give him honor in his wanderings.

The Connecticut General Assembly, at its May session in 1792, appointed a committee "to superintend the Businefs of erecting and finishing a large Convenient State House in the Town of Hartford." The gentlemen named were: John Chester, John Caldwell, John Trumbull, Noadiah Hooker and John Morgan. The material specified was brick. They were to raise £1500 from the inhabitants of the City, Town and County of Hartford, and if raised before May 1, 1793, they were authorized to draw on the State for £1500. The original subscription list of Hartford has been preserved by the Connecticut Historical Society. Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth was the first and largest subscriber, giving $500. The city contributed $3500., and the County $1500. In May, 1793, the Assembly granted the privilege of a lottery to raise £4000. It was attempted, but failed of financial success. After the money raised had been used, and work on the building was suspended, the General Assembly accepted the proposal of Colonel Jeremiah Halsey of Preston and General Andrew Ward of Guilford, to complete the State House "according to the proposed plan," in exchange for the State's interest in the Gore Lands on Lake Erie. They received a deed of these lands July 25, 1795.[2] Their land venture was not successful, and subse-

[1] "The Old State House, Hartford — Why it should be preserved" — *Publications of the Municipal Art Society of Hartford*, Bulletin No.15; *The Hartford Courant*, Nov. 2, 1904, Oct. 19, 1905, March 7, 1906, March 4 and 10, 1910, Nov. 19, 1910, Feb. 3, May 24, and Dec. 3, 1911, March 8 and Nov. 16, 1913; *The Hartford Times*, March 10, and Nov. 19, 1910, March 10, 1912.

[2] See "The Connecticut Gore Land Company," by Albert C. Bates, in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, 1898, pp. 141 ff.; *The Hartford Times*, Oct. 20, 1908.

quently they received assistance from the State. The building is said to have cost $52,480. A Hartford builder — Joseph Woodbridge — was in charge of the construction.

That this State House was erected after a design by Charles Bulfinch, cannot be doubted. It is unnecessary to produce drawings by this architect to prove this claim. Experts attribute the design to no other. There is, however, in the Comptroller's office at the State Capitol, a bill rendered by John Chester, chairman of the committee, for his expenses in September 1792 to Boston, then the architect's home. It reads: "To Journey & expences to Boston for a plan of faid State House, $31.60." He was probably moved to this because of the advice of his associate, John Trumbull of Hartford. On September 30th, Trumbull wrote a letter to Hon. Oliver Wolcott at Philadelphia, in which he says: "A new State House is to be built here next year upon a Design of Mr. Bulfinch, which I think is worth executing in the best materials." [1] The writer then specifies certain particulars and gives details of the building, on which he desired to secure an estimate in marble. These could only have been given after an acquaintance with a design. It would seem that Mr. Chester's visit to Boston was successful, and that John Trumbull had examined the design, and possibly had it before him when he wrote.

This building was first occupied by the General Assembly in May 1796. It was then practically completed. The balustrade around the roof was added in 1815. In 1822, the cupola was ordered. It is said to have been copied from that of New York's old City Hall. John Stanwood put it up in 1827. The Common Council of Hartford appropriated $150. in 1848 for a clock. The balance was paid by private subscription. The bell was cast in 1830, by Enos Doolittle for Ward, Bartholomew and Brainard of Hartford. While all that has been said or written of the architectural excellence of this historic edifice is true, it must ever be regretted that it can no longer be seen, as originally intended, from the eastward slope at the head of State Street. Its front entrance was on that side, and distance is necessary to reveal its stately elegance. This view was obstructed by the gov-

[1] *Wolcott Papers*, VIII: 64, in collections of the Conn. Hist. Soc.

ernment building, occupied in 1882. Pictures alone can disclose the State House and its surroundings in earlier days. As seen in them, with its esplanade planted with trees; a broad paved walk leading up to its steps; its three arches below closed by iron gates, and lofty windows above, through which one formerly looked from its portico, the whole surrounded by an iron fence, each post of which was a lictor's fasces — this public building was worthy of the honor that has been awarded to it by many a visitor.[1] This is the only edifice in Hartford that makes good claim to be historic. Here, the Hartford Convention met December 15, 1814, and the Constitutional Convention in 1818. More than thirty of Connecticut's governors have been inaugurated within its walls, where most of the State's public men for more than a century have been assembled. The chronicler for President Monroe, who visited Hartford June 23, 1817, mentioned it first, after stating that "the public buildings, considering the size of the place, are not exceeded by any town in the Union." Other Presidents of the United States have been the city's guests — President Jackson, June 17, 1833; President Polk, June 28, 1847; President Johnson, June 20, 1866; President Grant, July 2, 1870 — and, if they have not entered its doors, they must have looked with admiration upon the Capitol, as they passed. On September 4, 1824, the Marquis de La Fayette received from Hartford the most enthusiastic welcome ever given by her citizens to a visitor from abroad. Escorted by the military, and attended by his son, George Washington La Fayette, he rode through the city's streets in Daniel Wadsworth's carriage drawn by four white horses, and, along the way, the multitude rent the air with shouts — "Welcome to La Fayette" "Welcome to La Fayette." On the east front of the State House he was greeted by eight hundred school children, whose badges bore in French the sentiment "We love you, La Fayette." They presented the hero with a gold medal inscribed "Presented by the

[1] The esplanade was early surrounded with a wooden fence with turned posts and bars. Inside of it a row of Lombardy poplars was planted. In 1834 the Legislature ordered an iron fence, for which $8000 was appropriated. In 1882 it was removed to the Old People's Home on Jefferson Street. Later it was secured to enclose the grounds of the West Middle School.

Children of Hartford, Sept. 4th 1824." In the senate chamber, which had been elaborately decorated, he was introduced to many of the ladies of the city. There was an evergreen arch on the west side of the State House, bearing on the right and left the words "Monmouth" and "Yorktown." Here he reviewed the procession. In the line, there was a company of eighty Revolutionary Veterans, under the command of Judge Hillyer. Many were old, and some were maimed. As they passed La Fayette, he stretched out his hand, and they all drew near to shake it, with much feeling — a moment that was never forgotten in after years by those heroes of American Independence.

The Connecticut Legislature held its last session in the State House in March, 1878. Its alteration for municipal purposes was then determined, and the city took possession March 13, 1879. The famous spiral staircase, with its graceful hand rail, which had been the work of Asher Benjamin, was then removed. The senate chamber was refitted for the Board of Aldermen, and the hall of representatives for the Councilmen. The building was dedicated to city uses October 22, 1879.

The City Hall of Hartford, previous to the occupation of the State House, was located on Market Street. This building was projected partly because a new market was needed. An auditorium was also desired for promiscuous public uses. Town meetings, after the erection of the old Court House, had usually been held in that building, though occasionally the inhabitants met in one or the other of the meeting-houses. There had been, however, a growing sentiment against the secular use of places of worship. On the other hand, amusements of various kinds had increased in popularity.[1] A commodious hall had thus come to be a public necessity. The matter was presented to the Council November 1, 1827, by Mayor Nathaniel Terry. It was favorably received, and a committee was appointed to inquire as to sites. The report recommended the purchase of the Lee homestead on Market Street. This lot had been under consideration by the parish of Christ Church as a

[1] See Dr. Parker's chapter on "Social Life after the Revolution" in *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 578 ff.

location for their new edifice. It was deeded to the city November 9, 1827. At the time, some favored a site on Trumbull Street, and others the use of State House Square, where stores underneath the hall could be rented. Plans were presented on January 28th, following. The dimensions of the building as erected, were sixty by one hundred and ten feet. The market on the ground floor provided about twenty stalls, those on the east side being entered by wide doors. A broad aisle ran north and south. The floor was of flagging. A "Watch House" for the four night watchmen, who then constituted the city's police force, was built in the southwest corner. At the north end were two rooms, one with cells where disturbers of the peace were confined. On the second floor, there were rooms for military and various other purposes. Those at the north end were for the Common Council. The hall itself, with an anteroom at the entrance, was on the third floor. A gallery at the south end was built in 1829. There are many living who remember this building and scenes within it, such as town meetings of the old sort, political gatherings, military occasions, graduating exercises, lectures, fairs, dramatic performances and balls. Here Daniel Webster was heard in 1837, and Abraham Lincoln in 1860. There was a time in Hartford's history when this City Hall was the center of a large social life, now scattered in many places; but the story pertains to more recent times.[1]

To return to the town's earlier history, it should be said that some buildings, now considered essential to public interests, were wholly unknown in early New England life. The system of town government was very simple. The selectmen were the high local officials. Of all their officers, the town clerk usually had the longest term of service. This was generally due to the natural fitness of certain men for such work, in communities where few had the time for it or were familiar with records. Prior to the Revolution, Hartford had only six town clerks. These were: John Steele, chosen November 16, 1639, served twelve years; William Andrews, January 12, 1651–2, eight years; John Allyn, April 11, 1659, thirty-seven years; Richard Lord,

[1] *The Hartford Post,* May 27, 1893.

December 23, 1696, nine years; Hezekiah Wyllys, December 25, 1705, twenty-seven years; and George Wyllys, December 12, 1732, fifty years. The deeds of this entire period filled only sixteen volumes. About the same time has elapsed since, and the deeds have filled more than three hundred and sixty volumes. Such has been the development of Hartford. The early town clerks, having only a few books in their care, kept them where it was convenient — in their homes, stores or offices. It is the town's good fortune that none have been lost or burned. This fact shows why there was no demand for a public record office. The present Halls of Record building was not erected until 1853.[1] It was preceded by a small building, which stood on the south side of Pearl Street, where the State Savings Bank is now located. It was used for town clerk and probate purposes. The land was bought, in 1835, from Robert Watkinson, and the building was erected the next year.[2]

One of the public places that would soon be inquired for today by a visitor to any town, is the post-office. Buildings devoted solely to this service, were unknown in colonial times. A consideration of their early custom of dispatching letters, and its development into a postal system is pertinent, however, and very important to an acquaintance with their life. In earliest times messengers came and went at intervals, mostly on public business. Letters were committed to them, and also to neighbors and friends, for delivery. Even the stranger considered this a matter of politeness. Places were naturally appointed by convenience or authority where letters were received or dispatched. At Boston in 1639, Richard Fairbanks's place was so named. There was a monthly mail between New York and Boston in 1672. Connecticut, and especially Hartford, New Haven and New London, profited by their location on the route of through travel. Sir Edmund Andros proposed to have "John Perry the post" go from Boston to Hartford monthly, during the winter of 1687–8, and "oftener in the spring"; but his project failed.[3] A new era in this service began with

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 84: 474; 91: 67, 68.
[2] *Ibid.*, 57: 29; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 372.
[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, III: 393, 398, 442.

the issue of letters patent by King William and Queen Mary, February 17, 1691–2, to Thomas Neale, Esq., providing for a postmaster-general of all the American Colonies.[1] Andrew Hamilton was then appointed manager; and the post between New York and Boston was continuous thereafter. In 1693, a general office was established in Boston. The rate to Connecticut was nine pence. John Campbell was later made postmaster at Boston. In 1704, he began publishing *The Boston News-Letter*. His successor, Ellis Huske, also established a newspaper — *The Boston Weekly Post-Boy*. There was an obvious connection between the postmaster's office and the printed dissemination of news. Thomas Short, the first printer of Connecticut, engaged with the General Assembly, in 1708, to dispatch with speed the acts and proclamations that he printed.[2] John Campbell early announced in his paper a fortnightly service between Boston and New York, by which Hartford and Saybrook were alternately the points where the post-riders met. In 1708, he proposed to the General Assembly "to settle a constant post between the towns of Hartford and Saybrook," and asked some allowance therefor.[3] It seems probable, therefore, that some convenient place in Hartford was early made a depository, where a letter could be left for the first traveller or post-rider going to its destination. Inns were often so used. Still we are unable to identify any such place during the first half of the eighteenth century. On January 1, 1755, James Parker and Company began to publish in New Haven *The Connecticut Gazette*. It was printed "at the Post Office, near the sign of the White-Horfe." In 1761, the "Printing and Post Offices" there were at the house formerly occupied by Captain Hatch. To further the circulation of his paper, Parker employed a post-rider in 1755. He went weekly from New Haven to Hartford, via Wallingford and Middletown. Parker's advertisement on October 18th says, "My good cuftomers at or near Hartford are defired to pay their Arrears to Mr. John McKnight." This gentleman, who then lived on Wethersfield Avenue, was a Hartford merchant. He prob-

[1] *Acts and Resolves of Mass.*, I: 115; VII: 50, 430, 434.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, V: 69. [3] *Ibid.*, V: 69.

ably received and delivered copies of Parker's newspaper, and possibly had some further connection with this early post service. At that time, letters and papers were received and delivered at Hon. Jonathan Trumbull's store in Lebanon, Hugh Ledlie's in Windham and Daniel and Joshua Lothrop's in Norwich. *The Connecticut Gazette* was suspended in 1764, and, on October 29th of that year, the prospectus of *The Connecticut Courant* was issued. In 1764, also, John Walker was appointed postmaster of Hartford. He was the son-in-law of Dr. Normand Morrison, who had died in 1761. The postmaster was living on the Morrison estate, the house and shop being on the east side of Main Street, a few rods north of the square. Here he kept the post-office. It was advertised as a place "well accommodated for a merchant or tradesman." In 1767, there was some irregularity about Walker's accounts, and he was displaced and lodged in Hartford gaol. The case did not come to an issue in the courts, much to the disappointment of James Parker, who had become, meanwhile, secretary to the postmaster-general in New York.[1] On October 22, 1767, William Ellery, maternal grandfather of Governor Thomas H. Seymour, was commissioned postmaster by Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Foxcroft, joint postmasters-general. He kept the post-office at his store, "near the Great Bridge." The post-riders were then Isaac Tucker and John Bunce. Andrew Hurd was engaged in 1769. Their route was between New York and Boston, via Hartford, which had one post day a week. This service did not pay, and it was proposed to discontinue it. Secretary Parker thought the riders carried more letters for themselves than they did for the service. They were allowed to deliver packages at their own rates; and certain persons evaded the postage by enclosing letters. An order was issued in 1771, requiring the receiving post-master to open these packages. Mr. Ellery resigned in 1770, and a commission was issued to Mr. Knight Sexton, but the former postmaster soon resumed office. He served until 1777, being recommissioned by Franklin, September 22, 1775. For a time in 1771, the office was removed to the

[1] "Seymour Papers" in *Boardman Collection*, State Library, No. 5479 to No. 5499.

house of John Ledyard, Esq., on Arch Street. James Parker died in 1770, and Alexander Colden succeeded him. The latter was followed by R. N. Colden. In 1774, the secretary sent Mr. Ellery "a set of Stamps" for the Hartford office. The postmaster was required to mark each letter as it came into his office, with the name of the town, month and day of the month. *The Connecticut Courant* of April 7, 1777, announced the resignation of William Ellery and the succession of Thomas Hilldrup, who settled in Hartford about 1772. He was a watch maker and repairer. His shop was located "a few rods north of the State House," where Dr. Jepson had been. Here he kept the post-office for several years, removing thence to another shop, "a few rods southwest of the State House." His frequent change of location afterwards made the post-office a jest among the townspeople. In 1790, the national postal system was established, and Thomas Hilldrup was its first Hartford postmaster, being appointed February 16, 1790. He was succeeded, on January 1, 1795, by Ezekiel Williams, who served until 1803.[1] One can easily imagine what this post-office in Hartford was in colonial times — a mere depository for the contents of the postboy's saddle-bags. The conditions during the Revolutionary War augmented the importance of it and increased its use, but they did not tend toward its regulation as a business enterprise. After the town became a convenient connection in stage travel, and prominent through river trade and its own enterprise, the post-office began to assume a new function in commercial life.

[1] *Hartford Sunday Journal*, June 25, 1882.

CHAPTER XV

SOCIAL RESORTS AND LIFE

THE man some students of Hartford's early history would most like to interview, is the traveller who has thoroughly seen the town and is about to resume his journey. If the ferryman had only kept a record of the gossip he heard, and had passed his notebook on to his successors, it would have told an interesting story. His passenger would have had little to say about the houses, churches, mills, shops or highways of the town, for they were like others throughout New England; but he would have given us some inside information concerning the resorts, occasions, customs and dress of the town's society. Now and then, some one did visit our fathers, even from abroad, and print a few of his observations. A Frenchman, who came in 1788, wrote of the town: "It is confidered as one of the moft agreeable in Connecticut on account of its society." [1] To another visitor, we are indebted for a description of the doings on election day. If others had only told us in detail what they saw and heard during the fair week in May or September, on a market or training-day, or about some good dame's tea-table, we would become acquainted with the town's social life. There were no novels written in that day, nor society journals. They took no photographs. Very few wrote letters on the common affairs of life. Occasionally some one made a deposition in court, and then the plain truth was told. The fact is, that the antiquary's most difficult task is to picture, with proper drawing and color, the life of colonial times that every one would now find most interesting. Records, genealogies, furniture, portraits and grave-yards, while they are valuable, are apt to make our ancestors appear too much like mummies in a museum. Perhaps there are some reasons for gratitude in the disclosures made concerning a few, of those days, who lied,

[1] *New Travels in America*, by J. P. Brissot de Warville, p. 72.

stole, slandered their neighbors and became drunk at the taverns, just like modern folks, for that is unmistakable evidence that their daily life was such as our own. At first, social life in New England was quite like that of the Puritan class in the mother country. Here, however, it had another environment and, as time passed, it came into its own — a type of society that could be found nowhere else. It is impossible here to trace minutely the development of this social life. Let it suffice that we introduce the reader to some places in early Hartford to which it habitually resorted, and to those special occasions when, in its best attire, it displayed itself in public.

The reason for the law of 1644, establishing inns, was, the need of entertainment for "passengers and strayngers." These innkeepers were to be nominated by the inhabitants of each town, and to be approved by two magistrates. We have no record of early nominations in Hartford. Perhaps Thomas Ford, Jeremy Adams and Zachary Sandford may be considered as innkeepers, by the appointment of the General Court. Naturally, these inns soon became widely known. There, all travellers or distinguished guests sought entertainment. Few prominent planters of that time were not, on occasion, attendants at court and, probably, guests at the inn. Jeremy Adams was doubtless a typical landlord. He was a man of some standing in the town, had been a constable, and, in 1638, was twice appointed to attend Captain Mason in trading with the Indians for corn. On some public matters he seems to have been considered an authority. He certainly had a mind of his own, and was not always backward in expressing it. On one occasion, he encouraged Thomas Hosmer to resist an officer, and was guilty of "passionat distempered speches, lowd languadge & vnmannerly cariedge" before the court. He was careless in his financial management; a man, too, it is thought, who had some personal idiosyncrasies. And yet he was apparently the inhabitants' or court's choice to succeed Thomas Ford as innkeeper. Probably he had some affable and generous characteristics, which made him a good entertainer with wit and wisdom, as well as in the culinary department. At least his inn was a popular resort for social life. It stood

some rods back from the roadway. In front of it there was a well. A garden and outbuildings were conveniently placed in the rear. It was just such an inn as a man, who was nearly thirty years old when he left England, would have established in a new country — as much like the old inn of his native town as it could be. The same scenes transpired within it as are recorded of famous hostelries across the sea. There, its habitués discussed political issues, named their candidates for the next town meeting or the Colonial government, and by unanimous consent drank to their military heroes. Sometimes, commissioners of great dignity spent many days there. Officials of fame in other colonies arrived, creating a flutter of excitement throughout the community, and, in due time, departed. If an Indian war was raging, military officers held important councils there. One can easily imagine the arrival of expected scouts. Ministers sometimes met there. It was then as proper for them to drink rum as it was for their parishioners. That old inn probably witnessed many a festive scene about Landlord Jeremy's hospitable board. Alas, courts were held there, when stories, criminal or scandalous were rehearsed, and the condemned went forth to the pillory, stocks, whipping-post or gallows. These were the sensations of the community. Any day, the landlord might have expected at nightfall the coming of the young emigrant family on their way westward; or the visit of the frontier farmer, for some news to carry back to his solitude and something to cheer him on his way homeward; or the arrival of the captain, whose ship had anchored in the river off the landing-place with a cargo from the West Indies or England; or the summons of the mud-covered rider, who had certain packets of important papers for the Colonial Governor, and perhaps letters for delivery to the inmates of Hartford's homes. All these were welcome visitors. They had news from the border settlements, from the Bay, or from the great outside world and the home government, upon which so much of their prosperity and happiness depended. The landlord could then replenish his wasted stock of news, for that, rather than rum, was the important commodity in maintaining an ancient inn. It was that which gathered

his customers. In the course of time, the post-rider arrived at such inns with some regularity. Then many awaited the disclosure of his treasures. It was toward the close of the colonial era, we must remember, that newspapers came into circulation. One reason why they were so barren of local items was, that the inhabitants had this other method of disseminating news. It was carried by travellers from inn to inn. That custom helped to make the New Englanders of those times a race of newsmongers. Thus the ancient inn had a useful mission, notwithstanding some incidental harm. It quickened the intelligence of society, disseminated much necessary information, furthered the moral advantages of publicity, helped to restrain and detect crime, served the people for a post-office, often sent abroad warnings of danger, and dispatched many a message of courage, cheer and affection. Jeremy Adams and his successors were important factors in all this. He must have had some qualities that made him the man for the place, to have held such sway until his death in 1683. At all events, his demise was properly mourned, for John Talcott, treasurer of the Colony, notes in his accounts, that he paid for "3 Gallons and 3 quarts of wine for Jer: Adams funerall."

Zachary Sandford kept this inn for twenty-five years. In 1713, his son-in-law, Jonathan Bunce, "reigned in his stead." A daughter, Sarah Bunce, then married Samuel Flagg, who acquired control in 1732. He established there the "Black Horse Tavern." His inn became equally famous. In 1740, he erected a new house. Under the date September 30th, Rev. Daniel Wadsworth made the entry in his diary, "Mr. Flaggs House raised." In 1756, when Samuel Flagg was omitted in the distribution of licenses, he petitioned the General Assembly for one. He then stated that he had "Largely laid out himself in accommodable Buildings." His license was doubtless withheld because of the enmity he had engendered in the dispute over the rights of the ancient proprietors. He also informs us that his inn was then a resort for many officers and soldiers in the war, and that places of entertainment were needed in the town.[1] Still, licenses had been granted that

[1] *State Archives: Travel*, III: 381–383.

year to thirteen persons. When Samuel Flagg died in 1757, his widow, Mrs. Sarah Flagg, continued the inn. At her death in 1769, her son, Joseph Flagg, became the landlord. After the Revolutionary War, the Flagg estate passed to other hands. Then Captain John Chenevard, who had married Hannah Flagg, kept a tavern at or near the same place. Its later history is often referred to.[1] We get a look into this tavern as Samuel Flagg left it, through his inventory. The furniture of his "Barr room" was as follows: a "Long table," "6 old chairs of y^e^ common sort," a pair of cob-irons and tongs, pint and quart decanters, "5 foot drinking glasses," "2 blew stone quart mugs," "4 punch bowls," a "case of bottles," "snuff bottles," pint, half pint and gill measures, vials, grater, etc. The house had an "old kitchen," probably used as a dining-room. Dishes were kept there, and it was furnished with an oval table. There was also a "new kitchen," where the cooking was done. The house had besides these a kitchen bedroom, chamber and cellar in that section. In its "buttery" there was a tempting amount of old pewter. The main cellar contained a stock of port wine, cherry rum and rum of the ordinary New England kind. On the first floor there was a "South-east Bedroom," where the fire-arms and ammunition were kept, and a "North Room," used doubtless as a parlor. The latter contained a library of twenty-seven books, among them "One Law Book of this Colony." On the second floor there were five bedrooms. A "Close room" and "Garret" are also mentioned. In an outbuilding, called a "Shop," tools of various kinds were kept. The landlord owned several cows, a yoke of oxen and horses for saddle use. He had no chaise. Such was the Flagg homestead of about three acres, largely covered today by fine insurance buildings.

This was by no means the only tavern in Hartford during the first century of the town's history. In 1663, Marshal Jonathan Gilbert bought the two acre house-lot formerly owned by Clement Chaplin. It was next north of Jeremy Adams's lot. Soon afterwards he removed thither from

[1] Scaeva's *Hartford in the Olden Time*, p. 213; *The Hartford Post*, Oct. 14, 1893; *The Hartford Times*, April 3, 1906.

the South-side, and was given liberty to retail wine. Here he kept a tavern until his death in 1682. His house was probably on the east end of his lot, near Meeting House Lane. His widow Mary Gilbert succeeded him, and, later, his son Samuel Gilbert. In 1703, the town's votes mention only Lieutenant Sandford and Samuel Gilbert as licensed to keep victualing-houses and retail liquors. There were other early inns, however, along the routes of travel from Hartford, such as John Sadler's in Wethersfield and Jonathan Gilbert's at Cold Spring in Meriden. Samuel Gilbert sold, in 1707, to Captain Caleb Williamson, who also kept an inn, which he leased in 1740, to William Tiley. The latter was the landlord for some years.

There were others in the seventeenth century who had licenses to sell liquors, but probably they did not entertain travellers. In 1693, the County Court granted a license to Mrs. Elizabeth Wilson. She was allowed to retail wines and liquors "to her neighbors, she not suffering it to be drunk in her house, and not selling it to servants or children." The record in the town votes in 1695 is, that "mrs wilson is allowed by the town to retail drink to those that have occasion untill this time twelve months She attending the Law theirin." In 1703, Ebenezer Gilbert, another son of Jonathan, acquired a lot next north of the homestead. He established there "a publique house of entertainment." In 1718 he sold to Benjamin Smith, who continued the business. At an early date, a tavern was located on the north side of the square. In 1708, Jonathan Arnold bought part of the prison lot from Daniel Clark, and was licensed to keep a public house.

About 1760, Hezekiah Collyer occupied the home north of the Court House, which his father Captain Hezekiah Collyer had bought in 1739. The house had been built by James Church about 1722. Between it and the prison lot, was the homestead of Deacon John Edwards. The younger Collyer kept a tavern and inn until his death in 1768. His widow Jannet Collyer succeeded him. Her inn was well-known during the Revolutionary War, and quite popular, being without any suspicion of tory sentiment. Here, General Washington was entertained. After William Col-

lyer had kept this tavern several years, Frederick Bull, in 1788, established there the "City Coffee House."

On the west side of the meeting-house yard, where the Phoenix Bank building now stands, Samuel Pelton was licensed to sell liquors in 1747. He sold the property in 1751, to Samuel Smith of Middletown and David Bull of Westfield. The latter was licensed about the time of this purchase. He acquired the entire property in 1757, and added other tracts later. Here David Bull kept the famous "Bunch of Grapes" inn for many years. Cotton Murray also kept an inn, in 1783, at the sign of the "Globe," on the west side of Main Street, where others succeeded him.

One of the most popular locations for taverns in early Hartford was near the ferry. It is not unlikely that Thomas Cadwell, the first ferryman, kept an inn at the Scott-Ford homestead, after it passed into his hands. His son, Sergeant Edward Cadwell, who inherited the Stebbins homestead, was licensed in 1706 "to keep a house of entertainment for strangers." He did so for years. Daniel Messenger, Timothy Bigelow, Nathaniel Pease and Benjamin Bigelow, were successively licensed to sell liquors when they kept the ferry. On the east side of the river, "about thirty rods from the ferry," Widow Dorothy Burnham in 1753, and for several years thereafter, entertained travellers, who were hindered in crossing the river. The Pitkin tavern answered the same purpose, and, to some extent, Gideon Benjamin's. During the Revolutionary War, that of William and Jannet Knox, on the west side near the landing-place was the most popular.

On the South-side, also, there were several early inns or taverns. Joseph Mygatt was licensed in 1656. He lived near the present Capitol. In 1707, William Worthington received a license. He was probably then living on a place, which he bought in 1709, from Samuel Gilbert. It was located on the west side of a highway, then leading southward from Wyllys Street. Amos Hinsdale kept a tavern in this neighborhood as early as 1744, and for many years afterwards. He was located on the east side of the South Green. An advertisement in 1789, refers to Joseph Ashton as carrying on weaving "in the house where Amos

Moses Butler's Tavern

Hinsdale formerly kept a tavern at the south end of the city." Another public house of note before and during the Revolution, was the "Old Red Tavern," which formerly stood near the south-east corner of the Capitol grounds. Israel Seymour secured this property, in two tracts, in 1773 and 1775. On the latter there were "edifices," probably erected by the grantor, Jonathan Seymour. In these or a new building, Captain Israel Seymour kept the red tavern. It was a favorite resort for soldiers during the war. Here, the ministers were entertained at the installation of Rev. Benjamin Boardman. On August 16, 1784, Captain Seymour was killed by lightning, as he stood in his doorway.[1]

The most famous inn on the South-side was that of Moses Butler. This was located on the south-west corner of Main and Elm streets. It had formerly been the homestead of Samuel Howard, who died in 1750. In the distribution of the estate in 1754, there was set off "To Sarah the wife of Moses Butler the north eaft part of the Homestead with the Building thereon." The south part was distributed to the only son, Samuel Howard, from whom it passed, in 1788, to Norman Butler. The entire frontage was about nine rods. In 1754, there were two houses upon this property, an "old house" and a "new house," apparently connected, or not far apart. That year Moses Butler was licensed. He kept this inn for thirty years, and perhaps longer. It was a popular meeting place. The physicians and surgeons of Hartford County met there in 1784, and perhaps found it a convenient resort earlier. This was eight years before the formation of the county society. It is said that a number of elderly men were accustomed to gather there evenings, to learn the news. Each of them was allowed to spend seven coppers for half a mug of flip, and no more. They were called the "Seven Copper Club." Landlord Butler was very particular about sending frequenters home at nine o'clock.

There were, also, outlying inns in various sections of the town. One was at John Seymour's, on the road to Farmington. Captain Timothy Seymour was the host in later

[1] Dr. Parker's *Hist. of the Second Church*, p. 156; *The Connecticut Courant*, Aug. 17, 1784; *The Hartford Times*, Oct. 3, 1894.

colonial times, and was succedeed in 1779 by his son, Norman Seymour. The well-known Wadsworth inn was on the Simsbury road. It was kept by successive members of that family. On the east side of the river, Thomas Olcott, Ezekiel Webster, Russell Woodbridge, Benjamin Cheney, Gideon Benjamin and others, kept inns. Taverns, as places where liquor was sold, multiplied during the French wars. In 1756, there were no less than fourteen such resorts in Hartford.

The forefathers, of course, brought with them the drinking customs of England. Their experience here is interesting. It soon became necessary to prohibit sales to Indians. In 1643, they forbade all sales by unlicensed persons. This action was based distinctly on current abuses. Within a few years, these increased among persons of the inferior sort. A law regulating and restricting the use of liquor was enacted in 1647. It was aimed at the inn. One-half hour was the limit of time an inhabitant could spend in drinking at a "victualing house." He was also restricted as to the amount of liquor. It was forbidden to sell drink to be taken from the premises, except on an order from the master of a family or an allowed inhabitant. In the Code of 1650 some fine distinctions were made to prevent excess. For being drunk, so as to be bereaved or disabled in understanding, speech or gesture, the fine was ten shillings; for drinking excessively — that is more than a half pint of wine at one time — it was three shillings four pence; for continued tippling, it was two shillings six pence; and for imbibing at unseasonable times, or after nine o'clock at night, it was five shillings. Persons were actually fined under one or more of these counts. Other regulations were made later. Some liquors, such as Barbadoes rum, called "Kill Devil" were discriminated against. A tariff was levied upon all importations. During King Philip's War, when a general reformation of morals was inaugurated, the laws were more rigidly enforced. They failed to prevent excess; and there was always more or less illegal selling. Their drinking customs, which English settlers were wont to consider harmless in moderation, were found to be demoralizing. One reason was the enticing charm that lingered

about their inns, as the principal resorts of their social life. Doubtless, their general Puritan strictness in other matters tended to increase this. They had difficulty, also, in excluding those games that were customary in English taverns. In 1650, there was a law forbidding "shuffle board." This was amplified, in 1656, to include cards and dice. A more stringent law was enacted in 1686, because of the increase of such amusements. It specified gaming, singing, dancing and all riotous conduct in houses of public entertainment. The offenders in all such particulars were, of course, comparatively few, and, judged by the court records, they were mostly of the lower classes. In reputable inns such violations of the laws were not permitted. There is abundant testimony as to the decorum with which these were conducted, and the respectable standing of their landlords. President Dwight wrote of them in his *Travels* as follows: "The best old-fashioned New England inns were superior to any of the modern ones which I have seen. They were at less pains to furnish a great variety of food. Yet the variety was ample. The food was always of the best quality; the beds were excellent; the house and all its appendages were in the highest degree clean and neat; the cookery was remarkably good; and the stable was not less hospitable than the house. The family in the mean time were possessed of principle, and received you with the kindness and attention of friends. Your baggage was as safe as in your own house. If you were sick, you were nursed and befriended as in your own family. No tavern-haunters, gamblers, or loungers were admitted, any more than in a well ordered private habitation; and as little noise was allowed." [1]

Their military organization and trainings also furthered social relations. John Adams included training-days among the factors that made New England. The church of colonial times had no social aims. It afforded little opportunity for acquaintance, except as attendants conversed between services. Gatherings of young people were looked upon with suspicion. There were no public charities in which

[1] Dwight's *Travels*, IV: 249.

women could be associated. Acquaintance among them was fostered in their homes, at the spinning-wheel and other industrial pursuits. The tea-drinkings of later times gave them a better social occasion. From the first, however, the custom of visiting with friends within the town and abroad was general. Colonial dames frequently went visiting on horseback. In 1651 John Wilcox provided in his will that his wife should have the use of his mare, "to ride either to Windsor, to Wethersfield or to Hartford, or to The Sermon." To that end he gave her his "pannell and bridle." As entertainment in their homes was very simple, and required no advance preparation, the interchange of social life among the young people was easily effected, and hence quite general. Corn-huskings and apple-parings were its natural opportunities. For the most part the daily occupation of the men gave them no chance for social intercourse. They were a hard-working race. Sunrise and sunset marked the limits of their working-day out of doors. By candle-light or the blaze of the open fire, they fashioned various implements, tools and articles for home or farm use. It required an occasion to get the men together. That was what the training-day did. In early years, the train-band demanded their attendance. Few were exempt. Later, the various military companies did the same. Nor was the honor of being a captain, lieutenant, ensign or sergeant, lightly regarded.

The General Court ordered the formation of a train-band in each plantation, in 1636. Every soldier kept his arms and ammunition at home. Once a month they had a training-day. Then their arms were inspected and they were drilled. Absence, without lawful excuse, was punishable by a fine of five shillings. After the Pequot War, Major John Mason was made the commander-in-chief to train the soldiers of each plantation. Their practice in 1650 was embodied in a law on "Military Affaires." It provided that all men between sixteen and sixty years of age should bear arms, magistrates and church officers excepted, unless exempted by the court. Then trainings were held in March, April, May, September, October and November. In 1654, a general muster of all their military companies

was ordered for every second year. They had pikemen, who wore corselets of wadded cotton for protection against Indian arrows, and musketeers, who carried bandoleers and rests. A troop was organized in 1657, which came to high dignity and usefulness as dragoons. From these beginnings, they developed a military system, which was the subject of much legislation during colonial times. It attained no mean proportions for that age. Hartford's train-band was given the precedence over all others in 1662. Later, this was divided into North-side and South-side companies. An East-side company was organized in 1698, and another in the West Division in 1714. When an enumeration was made in 1680, there were in Hartford County 835 trained soldiers and a troop of 60 horsemen.

Only imagine what must have transpired on a training-day in the old town. At eight o'clock in the morning, when the drum sounded, the soldiers were assembled in the meeting-house yard. The very appearance of the boy of sixteen and the man of sixty was significant. There might have been three generations of one family in the ranks. Some fathers were there with an array of stalwart sons. There was a roll-call by the clerk. Woe to him who was tardy or missing. Then, perhaps, their arms were inspected — old flint-locks, some of them used doubtless in English wars; pikes like those of ancient guardsmen, and swords of various patterns. Hours were passed in instruction and drilling. Then there was very likely a review in front of the inn, where the Governor and some of the magistrates had convened. Yet all this was only the formality of the day. After they were dismissed, there was time for feasting and merriment, and much of it, too, in homes and taverns to which they scattered. On the morning of such a day in 1737, Parson Wadsworth wrote in his diary, "Publick diversions often occasion much sin. I wish it may not be y^{e} case with this." Be that as it may, they doubtless enjoyed the day. The older men discussed their farms, herds and crops; the younger men their work, play and the girls, quite as they would now. The occasion was, of course, highly useful. It kept alive the military spirit and generated patriotism. Still it won and held its place in public esteem

throughout colonial times largely because of its social features.

In this respect, election day in Hartford was not altogether unlike it. The political significance of a gathering of the freemen in early times, augmented public interest in the day. It gave the occasion a dignity that did not pertain to a military training. This feature suffered little or no decline with passing years. The description a certain visitor gives of this day in 1807, would as well have answered for earlier times.[1] He details the arrival of Governor Trumbull from the eastward, on horseback, his reception by the horse and foot guards at the river, their escort of him to his lodgings, the procession of officials, clergy and representatives the next morning to the South Church, where the election sermon was preached, the dinner at the inn, the meeting of the General Assembly, the inauguration and the election ball. Election day, this writer declares, was a holiday in the state, as was the rest of the week. Families then exchanged visits and treated their guests with election cake.

The social life of Hartford in colonial times may seem to one who considers it superficially to exhibit little change. The warp of its fabric was very much the same. Inns, shops, markets and other resorts continued throughout this period, with no great alteration. They had election and training-days, corn-huskings and tea-drinkings that had run an uninterrupted course of fashion. Still the woof of the fabric was gradually changing. One generation was followed by another, of a different sort, and each looked askance upon its successor. It is a very difficult matter to trace this transformation of society with our scanty materials. We know, however, that it had gone so far in 1675 as to demand a general reformation movement in New England. King Philip's War was thought to be a divine judgment upon a backslidden people. The ministers testified against a multitude of provoking sins, and uttered ominous prophecies of dreadful things that might be expected. New laws against some social vices were enacted.

[1] *Kendall's Travels*, pp. 1 ff.

The magistrates enforced them in the courts with consecrated zeal. In the election sermon of 1674, Rev. James Fitch referred to the "Many evil Cuftomes and Degenerate Manners" of that day. The context shows that he had in mind the contrast between them and those of earlier times, for he distinctly reminded his hearers of the settlement of the river towns. There were only a few of the original planters then living, some of whom were doubtless in his audience. How apparent the contrast must have been to them! The young people about them were unlike their grandfathers. Puritanism had changed. There was a difference in ideas, language, manners and dress. Still those youth grew to old age and passed through the same experience. The middle of the eighteenth century found the wealth of Hartford materially increased. Those families that had lived in the town for more than a century, assumed quite naturally that social standing which time alone can give. More attention was paid to education. Social refinements and culture were more highly regarded. Wealth had enabled some to escape much of the drudgery of life. The houses were better, their furnishings more luxurious. Rugs had begun to cover floors that had once been sanded. Chairs supplied the places of forms and stools. China had displaced pewter. New fashions of dress had come in. The elegance of some, when arrayed in their new French styles, was shocking; but the "granny" forgot how she had given a similar shock in her day. When *The Connecticut Courant* began to advertise what was for sale in the shops, fashions seemed to change more rapidly. The newspaper made the people aware of the arrival of a new assortment of dry-goods. Merchants offered "English and India goods" received by the latest ship. Sally Tryper had "female aprons imported from Europe" in her shop. Caleb Bull was more conservative. He had "beaver hatts made in Hartford." What a sensation there must have been in the old town in 1775, when Mary Gabiel opened as a "mantua-maker and milliner from Paris." Society surely moved very fast after the French wars; and it might have been arrayed in cloth of gold in a few years, had it not been for the Revolutionary War. Then the men went back to their

old leather breeches, and the women, like Faith Trumbull, cast their scarlet cloaks upon the altar of freedom.

The dress of people during colonial times is, indeed, a fair exponent of social conditions. Inventories do not, of course, enable us to trace in detail the changing styles, but they furnish a reliable and accurate means of contrasting different periods. Jewelry, for instance, was very rare in early times. We have not met with any among the Puritan founders of Hartford, though some may have had seal rings. In 1662, Casper Varlett, or Judith his wife, had "A gold Ring wth a Diamond," but they were Dutch, and she was accused of being a witch. Doubtless the ring belonged to her. John Crow, a grandson of Elder William Goodwin, died at sea in 1667. He had several gold rings; but he was engaged in trade with the West Indies and likely to secure such, as sea-captains often did. Major James Richards also had "gold rings," at his death in 1680. His granddaughter, in 1759 had diamonds and much valuable jewelry. The great granddaughter of Rev. Thomas Hooker, in 1765 had a "gold Necklace & Locket," "gold Buttons," "4 gold Rings" and "1 p^{r} Stone Earings sett in gold." We do not suspect that Madam Susanna Hooker had any such possessions, or her descendants for two generations. Early silver-smiths were mostly engaged in making and selling silver pieces for household use. The jewellers of later colonial times, like Ebenezer Austin, advertised, as a matter of course, "cyphered stone ear-rings set in gold," and other jewelry.

It would surely be a fascinating amusement, and yield a most interesting exhibit in water colors, if the articles of dress left by certain colonial characters were used to clothe their imaginary figures, as children dress up paper dolls. We should then see the early Puritan in contrast with his colonial descendants. It would surprise us to find how colors displaced the conventional black; how soon those, who were able, laid aside homespun; how much the men thought of a best broadcloth suit, with a fancy waistcoat; and how velvet and silks exerted their charm over the women. Unfortunately, in most inventories of the first generation, the value of "wearing apparel" is given as one item, and

sometimes the contents of the purse is added. The clothing of an early planter seldom exceeded £10 in value; and that sum seems high for what he had. Here is the trader, who ventured first into the wilderness, clothed in a "Portingale cap," "A Jackette & p^{r}re of breches," probably leather, "stockings & shues." He could have worn "a pair of Indean stockins," and if he wanted a coat, he could have put on a short one of "darnixe," or one made of either "Catte skins" or "Racoone skins." An original settler of honored name left only "a Coate, a Jergen, 2 dubletts and a p^{r}re of breeches." This seems to be a meagre wardrobe; but the value given in inventories, even to old garments, indicates that all articles of dress were included, except of course those in which the decedent was buried. Another planter of good means had "3 suits of apparrell, wth hatts, stocking & shues," valued at £13 5s., which is above the average. The conclusion is warranted that the clothes of most of the founders of Hartford, who died within twenty-five years, were of the plainest sort and coarse but strong material. Their work clothes were usually of home manufacture. The skins of wild animals were commonly used in winter, and the men all wore breeches of tanned deerskin. Ministers, magistrates and men of social standing had clothes suitable for public occasions. In fact, one of their early laws restrained excess of apparel by those of inferior rank, and the constables were authorized to warn any who ignored these proprieties.[1] John Baysey was an original proprietor, and one of the settlers of 1636. He was a weaver by trade, industrious and thrifty. When he died in 1671, his inventory was of creditable size. His apparel is given in detail, and illustrates both Puritan simplicity and the increased supply of clothes among such as lived to that day. He left the following wardrobe: "cloath suite, cloath cloake, surge suit, Jacket, doublett & Breeches, cloath coat, peniston wascoat, Leatheren Jacket & white cotton drawers, payre of Buttons, payre of Gloves, woofteed stockings, yarne stockings, low crownd Hatt, High crownd Hatt, payre of bootes, payre of shoes, cotten & lining drawers, two shirts, Bands & Handkerchiefs."

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 64.

One characteristic of the reformation movement, was an attempt to check what was considered extravagance in dress, then beginning to appear. The General Court, in 1676, declared that it was "unbecoming a wilderness condition and the profession of the gospell, whereby the riseing generation is in danger to be corrupted." [1] Specific reference was made to wearing lace and buttons of gold or silver, silk ribbons, or other superfluous trimmings. Offenders were to be listed at £150 and taxed accordingly; but magistrates, public officers of the Colony and their families were excepted, as also commissioned officers of the military. No particular application of this law in Hartford has been discovered, nor does it seem to have hindered long the tendencies of the times. Little by little, the fashions came to permit colors for both sexes. This departure was furthered by the increasing use of foreign goods. Before the middle of the next century, the ultimate outcome was apparent; and the development of colonial dress in later years was only a matter of time, under prevailing social conditions. Of these fashions, the inventories furnish many interesting details. How elegantly Samuel Edwards could be attired by an artist. He was a brother of Rev. Timothy Edwards, and died in 1732, leaving a large estate. Of coats he had the following: "loofe Coat of broad Cloth," "Streight bodyed Coat of broad Cloth," "Streight bodyed Coat duroy," "Loofe Coat of Duffels," "Streight bodyed Coat of fustian." He had waistcoats of fustian, broadcloth, black flowered silk and white linen. Of course, he had a pair of leather breeches; but he also had several of fustian and broadcloth. He could wear black and light colored silk stockings, worsted stockings, dark colored, light colored or "blewifh," or "old yarn stockings." He had plenty of the best Holland linen shirts. According to the occasion for which he was dressed, he would wear his "Noted wigg," "best bob wig" or "Naturall white wig." His hat would be his "beaver"; his stock of white muslin; and he had a pair of white gloves. But what would his grandfather, William Edwards, have said of him? We can dimly see Rev. Daniel Wadsworth, who died in 1747, dressed in his "black suit," with black

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 283.

silk stockings; silver buckles on his knee-breeches and on his shoes; a stock about his neck, and a periwig on his head. He seems to have been an example of ministerial proprieties. Still, he also had a blue coat and a drugget vest. The inventory of Rev. Samuel Woodbridge of East Hartford, who died the previous year, discloses the fact that he left no black suit, though he was probably buried in black. In the pulpit he wore a gown. His coat was of "blew broad cloth," and his "great coat" was blue. His best waistcoat was of "black silk Damafk." His knee-breeches were ornamented with silver and he had "gold sleve buttons." The blue coat had found favor with gentlemen before 1700; and clothes of a grey, butternut, or cinnamon color were sometimes worn.

One of Hartford's leaders of fashion, in her day, must have been Madam Elizabeth Wilson. She had a remarkable career in the matrimonial field, her fourth or fifth husband being Mr. Phineas Wilson of Hartford, who died in 1692.[1] As a woman of rare business ability, she left abundant evidence. When she died in 1727, her estate amounted to £7154 4s. 2d. Her wardrobe was valued at £46 17s. The inventory of it proves that in her time, and probably some years before her death, more costly dress goods had come into fashion among the ladies. She had gowns of "black Sattin," "mixed white and black Silk crape," "flowered Silk lined with read Silk" and "padifway" (paduasoy). The use of silk in Hartford for hoods, aprons, petticoats and cloaks, had become fashionable in the latter part of the seventeenth century, though comparatively few could afford it. The wardrobes of certain ladies, who doubtless had an acquaintance with Boston or New York society, indicate that they introduced some of these newer fashions. The best wardrobe we have met with to serve in measuring the advance in dress among Hartford ladies in later colonial times, is that of Mistress Mary Hooker, spinster. She was the daughter of Mr. Nathaniel Hooker, and died in 1765. Her gowns were of "dove Col^{d} Damask," "Light Blue Damask," "Blk padusoy wth Tale," "Strip^{d} Lutestring," "dark ground Chintz" "moufe Col^{d} gr^{d} Chintz," "Light

[1] Manwaring's *Hartford Probate Records*, I: 522; II: 619–624.

Sprig^{d} Chintz" "Blk Bombazein," "green Rufset," with a dozen others that were of less costly material, or had seen longer service. She had a "Blk Velvet cloak," a "Red cloak" and a "Blk Everlasting Cardinell." Her hoods represented the fashions of that day. They were of "white Sarfenett," "Blk gauze," "Blk Velvet with a Lace," "Silk wth gauze Border," and "flow^{d} Blk gauze." She also had a "womans Blk Hatt wth Lace," and an "old plain Blk Bonnet," not to mention a "Blk flow^{d} gauze Shade" and "2 Lac^{d} pinners." Besides her black shoes, she had pairs of "Blue Rufsel," "Brocaded Silk" and "yellow Damask." Ladies of that period were fond of handkerchiefs, in which their skill at needlework could display itself. Mistress Hooker had several such. She had two girdles of silver and one of "Blue silver," ivory fans, jewelry already referred to and "1 Blk Velvet mask," for the mention of which we crave the lady's pardon. No doubt she had graced many a social gaiety elsewhere in her younger days, for she entered the period of "laced caps" and "temple spectacles" before she turned over her wardrobe to two of the town's foremost men to be inventoried.

CHAPTER XVI

EARLY SCHOOLS OF THE TOWN

THE claim that our Puritan ancestors esteemed education, rests not so much upon their own attainments, as upon the honor in which they held it. They saw the relation of learning to the full stature of a man as a responsible being. It was valued as an avenue by which to reach the altitudes of religious faith. That trait was sure to manifest itself in a system of education. In the early pages of their records, therefore, one expects to meet with some vote that declares their purpose to educate the generations for whom they had won the wilderness.

On December 6, 1642, the founders of Hartford passed the following vote: "It is agreed that thurte pownd a yeer shall be seatled vpon the schoole by the towne for efer." Thus they laid the corner-stone of an edifice, upon which succeeding generations have never ceased to build. This vote seems to have been related to some special undertaking, not fully disclosed. It could not have been the beginning of their interest in education. Schools were not then, either here or in the mother country, necessary tenants of schoolhouses. The teacher made the school wherever he gathered his pupils. Such was the case with many ministers, and several of that profession were numbered among the early schoolmasters of the town. At an early date, most likely in 1637 or 1638, John Higginson came to Hartford. He was the son of Rev. Francis Higginson of Salem, and had once been a pupil in the Grammar School in Leicester, England. His widowed mother had lands allotted to her here in the plantation divisions. She settled in New Haven, where she died in 1639, leaving eight children. Although John Higginson was nominally the chaplain of Saybrook fort for several years, his duties may not have required a continuous residence there. "I was sometime a school-

master in Hartford," he afterwards wrote, "where I enjoyed the ministry of that godly man, Mr. Hooker, and of Mr. Stone." Cotton Mather says, "He first taught a grammar school and then betook himself unto the study of divinity." [1] Thus Rev. John Higginson was the town's first schoolmaster. Probably he was a student of divinity under Mr. Hooker, his father's friend, at the same time. We have no clue, however, as to the place or pupils of his school. It may have been kept in the minister's home. His later life in Guilford and Salem fulfilled the promise of his youth. He died in 1708, aged 92 years. After him Rev. William Collins was engaged, but we do not know exactly when or how long he taught. He had been, says Hubbard, "an hopeful professor, and preacher also privately, at Gloucester in England, till he came to be seduced there, being carried about with one of the female sex, and of familistical principles." [2] He went later to Barbadoes, where he preached for a time, and did some good; but when persecution arose, he, with others, came to New Haven in the summer of 1640. Mr. Collins "was entertained first at Hartford, to teach school." At that time he was above suspicion of heresy, but, through a follower of Mrs. Ann Hutchinson, he became infected with her opinions. One morning he left Hartford, without disclosing his reasons or destination. That was the end of his school. He went, it appears, to Aquiday, where he embraced Mrs. Hutchinson's views and married her daughter. In 1641 he was arrested in Boston, being found to be a seducer of the faithful, and was held for some months to pay a heavy fine. He was then released and banished.[3] In 1643, he was killed by the Indians, with other members of the Hutchinson family.

Neither of these early teachers are thought to have taught in a school-house. A single room in some private house would have served the ambitions of those first years. The town's votes give us no record of any school-house in Hartford before 1643; nor should we look for any then, except

[1] Mather's *Magnalia*, I: 365.
[2] Hubbard's *History*, pp. 340–345; Winthrop's *History*, II: 10.
[3] *Mass. Col. Rec.*, I: 336, 340, 344; Winthrop's *History*, II: 46–48.

as some portion of a private house was used for that purpose. In an inventory of the town's common property that year, the first item is, "2 great gunns: & Carriages & other things belonging to y^{m} in the schoole howse." [1] Moreover, at a town meeting, in April 1643, an engagement was made with Mr. William Andrews to "teach the children in the Scoole one yere next ensewing from the 25 of march, 1643," for which service the town guaranteed him £16 a year. He was expected to collect from the parents what he could of this sum, at the rate of twenty shillings for each pupil. It is evident that no more than sixteen pupils were expected to attend, and probably not that number, as the town agreed to pay the balance. Where was this school-house — the first of record at least in Hartford? It has been claimed that "it was the usage to set school-houses in the highway, and thus the location was not a matter of record." [2] Such buildings, it is true, were sometimes erected on public property, and, in these cases, there was no deed of land; but it would be unusual for this to be done, without any vote of the town or the appointment of a committee to locate the building. In this instance, it is unnecessary to assume such an exception. A lot was secured by the town, probably in 1642, upon which a house afterwards owned by it, was located. This is believed to have been their first school-house. It was called the "town house," as in a later instance where the building was certainly the school-house. That is the reason the place has not been long since identified. This lot was originally the home-lot of William Hills. It was situated on the southwest corner of our present Governor and Sheldon streets. In the earliest times, it was on their main highway running north and south, and was just south of the fordway across the Little River. This was a convenient location for both "Sides." The lot was recorded to William Hills, as an original distribution of the plantation, and comprised one acre and a quarter.[3] Jonathan Gilbert bought the southern part, which was recorded to him about 1645.[4] The town acquired the northern portion where the house stood. This may have been at first by rental or

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 68.
[2] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 224.
[3] *Original Distribution*, p. 262.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 363, 382.

purchase, of which we have no record, and is thought to have been in 1642. There is evidence, however, that this lot and house were owned later by the town. On March 22, 1658–9, the townsmen were ordered to "take Care of y^e^ Towne hous that was goodman hills: and repair the hous or fenc upone the towns acount," and, on November 22nd following, they were made a committee, with the addition of John Talcott [Sen.] and John Barnard, "to sell the Towne House." [1] This they did on December 7th, the grantee being Joseph Smith.[2] There was then upon this lot of about one acre a "messuage or tenement," doubtless the same that William Hills had built for his own use. It could have been none other than the "schoole howse" mentioned in 1643, part of which had been used for storing their great guns. There was nothing strange in this. Their meeting-houses were used for similar purposes. In the author's opinion, the acquisition of William Hills's lot by the town in 1642, was the undertaking that led to the appropriation of thirty pounds as above mentioned. This was the place where William Andrews opened the school in 1643, and it was ample to accommodate the sixteen pupils which set the limit of their educational expectations. The inventory of Joseph Smith, who died in 1689, indicates that his house was of the usual one story type. It had two rooms on the first floor, and in one of these, the school could easily have been conducted.

This was a "grammar school," and was supposed to prepare youth for the college life of those days. It was the successor to the venture of Higginson and Collins. There were also in those times private schools of a lower grade. At least one such school was kept in Hartford — that of Widow Mary Betts, doubtless in a room of her own house, on Seth Grant's original lot. This was on the east side of Trumbull Street, near the Little River. "Goody Betts the school dame" died in 1647. Her pupils were young children, whom she taught the simple lessons of the "horn

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, 1: 124, 125.

[2] *Original Distribution*, p. 100. The date of the deed to Joseph Smith was copied as Dec. 7, 1669. It should have been 1659. Several of the grantors were deceased in 1669, and Joseph Smith owed the town £50 for the property in 1664. *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 146.

book." Instruction of this kind was also given by parents; and the catechism was a means not only of religious training, but also of elementary education in their households.

Our next information concerning the town's educational facilities is derived from a vote of February 1, 1648–9. As it is of some length, and is the only action recorded under that date, we conjecture that the meeting had been called expressly to consider their school. This record rehearses "the necessityes of the Towne and the desires of many for some provision to be made for the keeping of a Scoole with better conveniency then hitherto hath beene attayned, the want whereof hath beene both vncomfortable to those who haue beene imployed in that service, [and] prejudiciall to the worke vnder hand, w^{ch} is lookt vppon as conducing much to the good both of the present age and of the future."[1] This proves that there was then in Hartford a progressive party in educational matters, and there is evidence to show that Governor Edward Hopkins was one of the leaders of it. The reflection on their old school-house situated near his home, and its unfitness for both teacher and pupils, is unmistakable. This reference is made more pointed by their conclusion to provide £40 by a rate, not sufficient, it was admitted, to attain the end of building a new school-house; but "in case any other shall make such an addition to the sayd summe that the worke may be carryed on and finished, eyther with tymber or bricke," the town further agreed "that the buildinge soe to be erected shall not be diverted to any other use or imployment but in a way of scoolinge without the consent of the partyes that shall contribute to y^{e} [sum] more than their rates." We can put no other construction upon this record than that one or more inhabitants considered a room in a private house, part of which was used as an arsenal, beneath the dignity of and inadequate for a town school, and some party or parties had given encouragement of erecting a grammar school building, by the payment of a sum in addition to the rate to be levied by the town. Some part of what the town promised, is lost in an undecipherable record; but it was evidently agreed that, if the new school-house was built, they would carry

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 85, 86.

on their educational work with greater diligence. It was common then to supplement rates with additional subscriptions for a public enterprise, and the town had received such assurances. This agitation was the beginning of a movement, which at first promised great results, but no immediate action was taken.

In May, 1650, Edward Hopkins being then Governor of the Colony, their Code of Laws was established. It contained an emphatic declaration concerning the education of their children in the English tongue and the catechism. "And further," it was declared "that all Parents and Masters doe breed and bring vp theire Children and Apprentices in some honest lawfull [calling,] labour or imployment, either in husbandry, or some other trade proffitable for themselves and the Common wealth, if they will not nor cannott traine them vp in Learning to fitt them for higher imployments." [1] A similar law was made in Massachusetts in 1642. The above code also contained a law concerning the relation of towns to schools, enacted in Massachusetts in 1647. It required in every township of fifty householders the appointment of a teacher to instruct the children in writing and reading, and in every township of one hundred householders the setting up of a grammar school to fit youth for the university, for which aid had already been proposed.[2] This law became the foundation of Connecticut's early educational system, and continued on its statute books until 1792.

The school in Hartford, so far as we are aware, went on as before in their arsenal school-house, with such improvements as could be afforded. Mr. William Andrews was teaching it in 1648. On February 1, 1649–50, Mr. Samuel Fitch, who was a son of Joseph Fitch and a nephew of Rev. James Fitch of Saybrook and Norwich, presumably began an engagement for three years, "to teach such children as shall be thought fitt to be taught by him." To all appearances, he fell out by the wayside, for, on November 19, 1650, it was ordered that Mr. Andrews should keep school for the "present year," beginning the 29th of the previous September. In 1651, Mr. Fitch married Susanna, the widow

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 521. Cf. *Mass. Col. Rec.*, II: 6, 9.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 112, 139.

of Mr. William Whiting. He died in 1659, and was a friend of the school to the last. Meanwhile the town, in furtherance of its project, granted a rate of £20 "towards the erection of the schoole howse," and, on January 12, 1651–2, it voted to raise £40 to be put in the hands of Elder William Goodwin for the same purpose, he being desired to take the care of the work. A year later the town was in debt to him for thirty shillings "w^{ch} hee payd for y^{e} scoole house." Then the town votes disclose no more of the matter for several years. We know, however, that Mr. Goodwin and some others were endeavoring meanwhile to secure a certain lot upon which to erect a school-house, and that the interest of Governor Hopkins had been sufficiently engaged to express a decided preference for this particular lot as a desirable location. It was the original home-lot of Samuel Greenhill, situated west of our present Main Street, between the Little River and Buckingham Street, and, if it had been secured, the Hopkins Grammar School, amply endowed, might now be located there. Samuel Greenhill died soon after his removal to Hartford, leaving a son Thomas, and a daughter Rebecca, who married John Shepard of Cambridge. His widow, Rebecca Greenhill, married Jeremy Adams, by whom she had six children. In this home the family lived until Adams bought the Steele lot, as elsewhere stated. Thomas Greenhill died in 1653, and the rights of the heirs involved this lot in litigation for many years.[1] It had advantages as a location for a school-house intended to serve both divisions of the town. It was on a highway, which was fast increasing in importance, and was just south of the bridge across the riveret. That Governor Hopkins had favored this selection, is certain, for, in 1664, Mr. Goodwin wrote as follows: "We do also desire and request that the school house may be set upon the house lot which was lately in the occupation of Jeremy Adams, *where our worthy friend did much desire that a school might be set.*" In 1653, Mr. Goodwin, still intent upon carrying out the earlier votes of the town, sought to purchase this lot, then valued at £30, from Edward Stebbins, his fellow ex-

[1] *State Archives: Private Controversies;* I: 1–18; Manwaring's *Hartford Probate Records,* I: 119–121.

ecutor of Thomas Greenhill's will. He encountered strong opposition from Jeremy Adams, whose wife had an interest in it. John Talcott, Samuel Fitch, John White and others, knowing the purpose and probably Governor Hopkins's intentions, urged him to sell. He refused. Delay ensued, and a law suit. Then on December 18, 1655, the town appointed a committee, whose members had been approved by Mr. Goodwin, to take account of the money that he had received from the town for building a school-house, and, on January 23rd, following, they received authority "to end the Biusenes Between m^r^ Goodwin and the Town about a Schole Hovs and order it as they see cause." [1] Deacon Stebbins testified in 1660 that, after Jeremy Adams had refused in 1654 to end the business, the town called back the money out of Mr. Goodwin's hands, "which they had left with him for the building of a school," and "he being frustrated of a convenient place to sett upon resigned it into their hands." [2] At the same time, John Webster made a similar statement, saying that the town "called upon M^r^ Goodwin either to have a fchool houfe built or to make return of the money of theirs that he had in his hands, [and] he being not able peaceably to enjoy the place w^ch^ he intended to gett his fchool houfe in, made his return of his money to the town." [3] Thus a project, in which Mr. Goodwin was doubtless acting to accomplish a purpose of Governor Edward Hopkins to found a grammar school in Hartford, failed of accomplishment. In view of the sequel, no one can measure the detriment it probably was to the town of Hartford.

During this period, also, the division in the church occurred over the candidacy of Rev. Michael Wigglesworth. Elder Goodwin became the leader of one party, in opposition to Rev. Samuel Stone. That this controversy affected their school, is not doubted. If not otherwise, the employment of Mr. Davis as a teacher in 1655, must have done so. John Davis, son of William Davis of New Haven, had been a college classmate of Mr. Wigglesworth. Gookin calls him "one of the best accomplished persons for learning as ever

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 107, 109.
[2] *State Archives: Private Controversies*, II: 3 a.
[3] *Ibid.*, II: 4.

was bred at Harvard College." [1] He met an untimely death, when Captain James Garrett's ship was lost at sea in the autumn of 1657. In 1655, an engagement was made with him at Hartford for "preaching and schooling," which is not recorded in the town votes. In 1656, the balance of £10, due him for this service to February 7th preceding, was appropriated by the town. The townsmen's account, also, shows that this sum was "appointed to M^r^ Dauis in the year 1655." Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull has called attention to the fact that it "was contributed or advanced before January 20, 1655–6, by six individuals — John Richards, John White, Samuel Fitch, James Steele, Francis Barnard, and the widow of William Gibbons — all of the South-side of Hartford, and three or four of whom were among the 'withdrawers' from the first church in 1669–70." [2] The situation in 1655 evidently was that Mr. Davis found his support largely if not wholly, on the South-side, among the followers of Elder Goodwin. After the fulfillment of the engagement with Mr. Davis, we have no evidence that a grammar school was kept for several years. The church controversy was at its height, and their school interests were submerged. On February 15, 1655–6, a new committee had been appointed, consisting of two from each "Side," to act for the town, "either In Byinge or Bilding a Hoose for a schole Hovse." If they built, they were not to exceed the sum of money due from Mr. Goodwin. It does not appear that anything was done by this committee. It is believed that the school was entirely discontinued, for, as already stated, the townsmen were ordered, in 1658, to care for the town-house and, soon afterwards, to sell it. This view is confirmed by the fact that, on August 12, 1659, when John Talcott made his will, he bequeathed £5 "towards the mayntayning a latin skoll at Hartford, if any be kept here." This was the second legacy the town had received for that purpose, the former being of land at Pennywise from William Gibbons. On March 28, 1660, liberty was granted to Mr. William Pitkin to teach school in Hartford. He was a lawyer, about twenty-four

[1] Gookin's "Historical Collections," in *1 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, I: 202; Sibley's *Harvard Graduates*, I: 300, 301; Winthrop's *History*, I: 401 n.

[2] *Conn. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, II: 54; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 114.

years of age. There is no record of a grant then made for his support. Tuition was probably paid that season by the parents. Most likely his school was kept from the first in some private house. In November following, the townsmen were empowered to hire the house of John Church for a school-house; and to "Incourage m^r pitkin to teach such Schollers as shall be sent to him." This house was that of Richard Church on North Main Street, which he had bought from William Spencer. It was probably then vacant because of the removal of the owner, with the "withdrawers," to Hadley. It is another instance proving that early schools were kept in private houses. Such was their arrangement for the next four or five years. Mr. Pitkin was the schoolmaster and he was paid in part by the town.[1] Thus we are brought to the end of what may be termed the pioneer period of Hartford's school life. We have the authority of John Trumbull, Esq., who prepared the memorial of 1798, hereafter cited, for stating that, during the first thirty years, there was no school in Hartford, except the grammar school, where the masters taught some Greek and Latin and much a. b. c. Such is the writer's conclusion, after a study of the records.

Governor Edward Hopkins, the son of Edward Hopkins, and Katherine, the sister of Sir Henry Lello, Warden of the Fleet and Keeper of the Palace of Westminster, was born in Shrewsbury, England in 1600. After his education, which was conducted there at the Royal Free Grammar School, he became a merchant in London. He came to New England in 1637, with Theophilus Eaton, whose wife was the mother of Ann Yale, whom Governor Hopkins had married. In 1653, he returned to England, and, upon the death of his brother soon afterwards, he inherited the honors of his uncle as Warden of the Fleet. He lived only a few years. His will, dated March 7, 1656–7, was proved in London on April 30th following. It was found to contain the following bequest:

"And the residue of any estate there [New England] I do hereby give and bequeath to my father Theophilus Eaton, Esq., Mr. John Davenport, Mr. John Cullick and Mr.

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 132, 136, 137, 141.

William Goodwin, in full assurance of their trust and faithfulness in disposing of it according to the true intent and purpose of me the said Edward Hopkins, which is, to give some encouragement in those foreign plantations for the breeding up of hopeful youths, both at the grammar school and college, for the publick service of the country in future times."

In a later clause he added to this bequest, in the following provision:

"My farther mind and will is, that, within six months after the decease of my wife £500 be made over into New England, according to the advice of my loving friends Major Robert Thomson and Mr. Francis Willoughby, and conveyed into the hands of the trustees before mentioned, in further prosecution of the aforesaid public ends, which, in the simplicity of my heart, are for the upholding and promoting the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in those parts of the earth." [1]

It seems to have been Governor Hopkins's intention to encourage the education of youth, both in grammar school and college. His early allegiance had been to Harvard College. He was President of the Commissioners of the United Colonies in 1644, when Rev. Thomas Shepard presented his memorial asking for contributions to that institution. He was Governor of Connecticut the following month, when that recommendation was adopted by the General Court. After his return to England, Rev. John Davenport of New Haven, probably with a knowledge of the difficulties encountered at Hartford, had solicited, by correspondence, his interest in establishing a college in New Haven. In a reply, dated April 30, 1656, Mr. Hopkins had given the project encouragement.[2] What his mind was in this respect is, perhaps, open to a difference of opinion. As to his intention

[1] Winthrop's *History*, I, 273–275; *The Hopkins Fund in Hadley*, 1657–1890; Bowditch's *The Hopkins Trust*, 1889; Bacon's *Historical Discourse on the Hopkins Grammar School; Catalogue of the Trustees, etc., of the Hopkins Grammar School of New Haven*, 1660–1902; *Historical Discourse pronounced at the 250th Anniversary of the Hopkins Grammar School of New Haven*, 1910, by Hon. Simeon E. Baldwin; Address by Dr. Henry Parks Wright in *Commemorative Exercises upon the 250th Anniversary of the Hopkins Grammar School of New Haven*, 1910; Barnard's *American Journal of Education*, IV: 657 ff.

[2] *New Haven Col. Rec.*, II: 370.

to assist in founding a grammar school in Hartford, there can be no doubt. This purpose, as above disclosed in a study of the records, must have been known to his friends William Goodwin and John Cullick, and probably, also, to some of the inhabitants in Hartford, before his return to England. In view of this knowledge, the town interpreted his will as a provision for the accomplishment of his purpose. This accounts for the apparently stupid and stubborn course pursued by the General Court in reference to the administration of his estate. It was unfortunate that the terms of his will were not more specific; but the uncertainty of conditions in Hartford at the time of his death may, in part, explain this omission. He therefore appointed four trustees, equally divided between Hartford and New Haven, and left them to carry out his purposes, according to their judgment. Of these trustees, Governor Eaton died soon after the testator, and Mr. Cullick on January 2, 1662–3, before any settlement was made. The decision was left, therefore, to Messrs. Davenport and Goodwin.

It is a plain matter of record that the General Court of Connecticut used every means within its power to prevent the trustees from the performance of their trust as they interpreted it.[1] Feeling in the church controversy was rife, and both Cullick and Goodwin were among the "withdrawers." The very Court before which they were pleaders in 1658, inaugurated this hostile course. That this was just after Cullick and Goodwin had petitioned the Massachusetts General Court for leave to remove up the river, and that the restraint on the estate was temporarily removed in 1659, when it was thought their project had been abandoned, is a sufficient disclosure of the animus of the Connecticut authorities. They desired to secure the estate for the benefit of their own Colony, which many may have considered the testator's intentions.[2] The Court conceded only one point to the wishes of the trustees — the appointment of Deacon Edward Stebbins and Lieutenant Thomas Bull, in 1661, to manage the estate.[3] It then had from Mr. Goodwin,

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 322, 338, 341, 345, 350, 361, 37.
[2] *The Hopkins Fund in Hadley*, p. 19.
[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 374.

who had removed meanwhile to Hadley, a written tender of £350 to the Colony. This was not accepted; but a committee was named to treat with the trustees, which was refused.[1] So the contention went on until March 10, 1663–4, when the General Court removed the sequestration, with some very lame excuses. It was influenced, no doubt, by the advice of Governor Winthrop, who had recently returned with their Charter, but more, perhaps, by Mr. Goodwin's intimation of "freeing the estate elsewhere," meaning by an appeal to the Chancery Court in England.[2]

The inventory of this estate, made by the townsmen of Hartford in 1660 and returned to the General Court, amounted to £1382 3s. 6d. Governor Hopkins's Hartford lands were valued at £545.[3] The trustees had then decided that one-half of the estate should be given "to further the Colledge at Newhaven," and the other half should be improved where they had "power to perform their trust, w^ch^ because they could not expect to have [it] at Hartford they concluded it would be best done by them in that new plantation vnto w^ch^ sundry of Hartford were to remove and [were] even now gone, yet they agreed that out of the whole an 100 li should be given to the Colledge at Cambridg in the Bay." [4] On April 30, 1664, however, Messrs. Davenport and Goodwin agreed to give £400 to Hartford, and divide the balance including the £500 contingent upon the death of Mrs. Hopkins, "between the towns of Newhaven and Hadley," £100 being paid to Harvard College out of Hadley's share. The provision respecting Hartford was expressed in the following terms:

"The debts and legacie being paid, we do give to the town of Hartford the sum of 400£, of which Hills his farm shall be a part, at the price at which it was sold by us, and payment ready to be delivered if there had been no interruption, the rest of the 400£ in such debts or goods as we or

[1] *Ibid.*, I: 578, 579.

[2] *Ibid.*, I: 412, 418; XV: 543.

[3] *The Hopkins Fund in Hadley*, p. 19.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 22. Mrs. Hopkins died Dec. 17, 1698. Harvard College and the Cambridge Grammar School received the contingent bequest of £500, through the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel," by an act of the English Court of Chancery, dated March 19, 1712–13. It amounted to £771 13 s. 7d.

our agents see meet, provided that this gift be improved according to the true intent of the donor, viz. for or towards the erecting and promoting of a grammar school at Hartford. Provided also that the General Court at Connecticut do grant and give to us, the said Trustees, a writing, legally confirmed, so that neither themselves will, nor any, by, from, or under them shall, disturb or hinder us in our dispose, or executing our dispose of the rest of the estate, which, being done this gift is in all respects valid." [1]

Following the above, is the request of the trustees as above quoted, with reference to the building of a school-house upon the lot where Governor Hopkins had in his life time desired it. This, therefore, connects the Hopkins bequest with the movement for better educational facilities begun in 1649, of which Elder William Goodwin was sponsor.

On January 18, 1664–5, the Council agreed that the estate should not be further "molested by sequestering," and Messrs. Stebbins and Bull promised to pay the £400 in the spring.[2] Meanwhile the town had appointed, December 3, 1664, Samuel Wyllys, James Richards and William Wadsworth a committee to receive the above sum, and employ it, "with whatsoever elce is allredy giuen or shall bee raised to that intent" "for the promoteing of Learning." This committee, profiting by the experience of Mr. Goodwin, sought another location. They settled upon the original home lot of Deacon Andrew Warner, who had removed to Hadley. It was the second lot west of that where their first school-house had stood. In 1659, Mr. Warner had sold it to William Loveridge, a hatter, who agreed to pay for it and an upland lot £130, in wheat, peas and "suteable hats." [3] Perhaps he was disinclined to dispose of his property; but the Council, on January 4, 1664–5, offered to remit certain fines due from him, if he would sell "for the use of the towne" and remove from the Colony. Accordingly he conveyed his two tracts to the committee. They also received at that time four tracts at Hockanum, comprising fifty-six acres, known as the Hopkins farm, then in the improvement of William Hills, together with Hopkins's rights

[1] *The Hopkins Fund in Hadley*, p. 26.
[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XV: 542, 543.
[3] *Original Distribution*, pp. 58, 490.

in all future distributions.[1] These lands were recorded to the town, January 18, 1665–6, for the "maintenance of the Latin school." Their value could not have been £400, but, how much the committee received in "debts and goods," is unknown. John Trumbull, Esq., who was the treasurer of the fund in 1789, gave the value of these lands as £200.

There were some inhabitants who still considered the Main Street location as preferable. For this reason, or because they wished the entire fund devoted to erecting the building, the town voted, January 30, 1665–6, "that the committee for the schoole should have liberty to build a schoole house in the most convenient place between William Warrens & Nath: Willetts house lot, which was Thomas Greenhills." This meant in the broad highway running southward from the bridge. The school-house would then be in Main Street, abreast of the Adams lot. Here it was afterwards erected. On the Loveridge lot, however, there were a house and other buildings, as good and probably better than the school had ever enjoyed. The committee decided, therefore, to use them until better could be afforded. The house was repaired, at an expense of £48, and their school was again in permanent quarters. In 1668, this lot was said to be "now in the possession and improvement of the Town of Hartford," and in a deed of 1673 it is called "The schoole house lot." [2]

The school here conducted for many years was variously termed a "Grammar School," "Latin School," or "Free School." The Hopkins arms were hung upon its walls. A frame for them was made in 1678, by Nicholas Desborough, for which Captain John Talcott paid 2s. 6d.[2] It was in this school-house that the Indians were confined in 1675, as elsewhere related. The school's affairs were managed by a committee appointed by the town. John Allyn and John Talcott, the Secretary and Treasurer respectively of the Colony, had been added in 1668 to that above-named.

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 421–423; *Hartford Land Records*, 2: 139. Cf. *Orig. Dist.*, pp. 5 ff.

[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. 175, 444.

[3] John Talcott's *Account Book*, State Library, p. 53. For the arms of Governor Hopkins, impaled with the Lello arms, and used by him on a seal, see *4 Ser. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, Vol. VI, plates.

The names of its early teachers are unknown. In 1673, Rev. Caleb Watson was engaged. His salary was £60 a year. Toward this the town granted a sum not to exceed £30, the inhabitants to send their children free of expense.[1] Mr. Watson was a son of John Watson of Roxbury, and was born in 1641. After his graduation at Harvard College in the class of 1661, he began teaching, and, from 1666 to 1673, is said to have been at Hadley. In 1687, the town of Hartford annulled its agreement with him, but perhaps thought better of it, for he continued as teacher until 1705. The town then voted that he be no longer master, and the committee were authorized to provide a successor "to manage that work in Convenient Time." He was then sixty-four years old. His property was encumbered and he was in debt. The town repeatedly abated his interest. In 1681, the General Court granted him two hundred acres of land. He was freed from his taxes in 1708, in "consideration of his good service." A memorial was presented to the Assembly in 1725 for his relief, he having been "for a multitude of years last past in ye office of school master and a great benefactor to the Colony." He died within a year, "an old man much respected." [2]

This school had meanwhile become, says Dr. Barnard, "The main reliance of the town for the education of all its children, old and young." Its usefulness in higher education was thus impaired, and the purpose of the Hopkins bequest was lost to view. After King Philip's War, an opinion more favorable to schools of a lower grade prevailed. Every town of thirty instead of fifty families, was ordered, in 1678, to teach its children to read and write. In 1690, there being still "many persons unable to read the English tongue," provision was made to compel such instruction. It was also enacted that there should be two free schools in the Colony, one at Hartford and the other at New Haven. These schools were to teach "reading, writeing, arithmetick, the Lattin and Greek tongues." The master was to be paid jointly by the school's revenue, the town and the Colony. All

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 170, 171, 173, 175, 184, 195, 203, 222, 223.

[2] Sibley's *Harvard Graduates*, II: 95–98; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 291, 294. 309; *Conn. Col. Rec.*, III: 33; IV: 305, 323, 429; V: 72; *State Archives: College and School*, I: 57.

elementary town schools, "as disstinct from the free schoole," were to be kept six months each year. The only qualification for admittance to the free school was an ability to "read the psalter." [1] Under these conditions, such instruction in Hartford was given at home or under a school-dame. Goodwife Kake was the teacher of Captain Talcott's children in 1675; and this primary teaching was doubtless the rule for years.

Thus, one of the Colony's free schools was located in Hartford. It was accomplished by transforming the old Grammar School. New interest was awakened, without any marked improvement. Its buildings were then old. The time had come for an edifice erected especially for a school-house. Again they turned to the site formerly selected, and decided to use the privilege granted by the town to build in Main Street, abreast of it. The location of the Second Church, and the enterprise that had gathered in that neighborhood, had augmented the importance of the bridge as a public center. Dr. Barnard says of this school-house that, in 1760, it had stood there for "seventy years," just south of Linden Place. The town votes make no mention of its erection. Perhaps such action was taken at the annual town meeting in 1691, the record of which is omitted. In 1692, the rate rose for some special reason from £45 to £121. The school committee was authorized in 1698 to ascertain the town's rights in the old property and "to dispose of said house & lot cald y^{e} Town house" to the best advantage of the school and the town. Probably it was rented for a time. In 1710, they were empowered to exchange it for meadow or other land of greater benefit to the school, which they did, two years later.[2]

The site of this school-house is approximately determined by the vote of the town in 1719, giving liberty for the erection of horse sheds in Main Street, to suit the convenience of attendants at the South Church. Their location was to be "at the South End of the School houfe by M^{r} Howards fence." [3] In 1748 Thomas Seymour, Esq., bought from Sam-

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, IV: 30, 31.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 252, 253, 298, 299; *Hartford Land Records*, 2: 160.
[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 15.

uel Howard two tracts of land here.[1] He erected a barn in 1749 and made an elaborate estimate of the expense of a new house, "in order," he wrote in his Memorandum Book, "to first Count y^e^ Cost," according to the Scripture warning. His estimate was £2946., upon which he afterwards commented thus: "N.B. I did not Count half the Cost." His house was of the best materials and superior workmanship, as the inspection of it proves, for it is still standing at the west end of Linden Place. After his death in 1767, it was the home of his widow Hepzibah (Merrill) Seymour and her children. Her rights in the cellar buttery where the "Arch" is and in the "Space way," near the "fore Door," whence the stairs ascend, as well as the deeds, easily identify the house. It passed in 1793, by deed of gift from her son, Mayor Thomas Seymour, to his son, Major Thomas Y. Seymour, who was living there in 1801, when the land for Linden Place was conveyed to the City of Hartford, the north and south lines running from the east corners of this house. It was later the homestead of Sylvester Wells, and from the estate of Ralph Wells passed, in 1839, to Hon. Gideon Welles.[2] Here President Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy lived before his residence in Washington. As the town gave Thomas Seymour, Esq., liberty in 1749 to move the school-house not more than twenty rods from the river, and a driveway to his house was early constructed, the school-house doubtless stood opposite the entrance to Linden Place, and was removed to suit Squire Seymour's convenience.

The school building was of wood and comparatively small. It is thought to have had only one room. Various provisions were made to secure fuel to heat it in winter. Here Rev. Daniel Wadsworth preached to the negroes and held other services on Sunday evenings. The teachers were young and inexperienced college graduates. Some of them studied theology, medicine or law, at the same time. Noah Welles Jr. of Colchester, a graduate of Yale College in 1741, was the teacher for several years. The terms of such in-

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 8: 99, 138.

[2] *Ibid.*, 20: 368; 21: 563; 22: 123, 459; 25: 272; 28: 9, 101, 133; 29: 23, 24; 32: 93; 43: 356; 58: 214, 281; 60: 191; 61: 88; 62: 322.

House of Thomas Seymour, Esq., 1750

structors were short, and their schools were likely to be inferior. From 1751 to 1760, Rev. Edward Dorr, pastor of the First Church kept a private school. Jeremiah Wadsworth was one of his pupils. It is not unlikely that other teachers did the same during this period.

The establishment of this Free School gave to Hartford better advantages for the higher education of those days, but it did not further public elementary instruction. The revised law of 1700 required all towns having no free school to maintain a school to teach children to read and write. Grammar, or free schools, were then provided in Hartford, New Haven, New London and Fairfield. In Hartford, children could enter after receiving elementary instruction at home, or from a school-dame. The above law also established a new system of aiding town schools from the Colony's treasury.[1] This was extended, later, to parishes. By an act of 1710, the inhabitants of the East-side had been empowered to manage their own schools. The West Division was made a society in 1711, to which like privileges were granted under a law of 1712.

Such were the conditions in 1753, when an agitation began in Hartford for the elimination of elementary education from the grammar school. The plan was to accomplish this by providing two parish schools, one in connection with each ecclesiastical society. This was really in accordance with the existing law, requiring such schools in every society where there were seventy families. This fact was used as an argument with the General Assembly in urging the division of Hartford into two districts. In 1753, the town voted that the income of lands and rents be applied for the future to the maintenance of the grammar school, and it appointed a committee to take charge of the fund. Further action in this direction was taken in 1756, it being expressly declared that the income of the town's school fund should be devoted "to the proper ufe or ufes defigned in the original Donation."[2] Thus the Grammar School was started on a new career, which we shall follow later. It was not so easy to establish the proposed parish schools.

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, IV: 331, 375.
[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 155, 167.

Neither of the churches had clearly defined parochial bounds. The natural division between them was the Little River, but some families in each lived on the side of the other. A difference arose, therefore, as to the dividing line. This occasioned long delay. The matter was before the First Ecclesiastical Society on January 16, 1756, when the above difficulty was stated. The opinion then recorded was that "this Society judg necessary that Exclufive of the Grammar School ther be (to be erected in some convenient places and situations within the Limits of said two Societys) two other Schools sett up and Supported for an English Education only," or, as later explained, to teach "reading, writing and arithmetic." [1] This society then petitioned the General Assembly for a division of the town into two districts. Some of the Second Society, however, desired to include in that district the homes on the north bank of the Little River, from Haynes's Corner to the Mills. Perhaps this was for personal reasons; but it seems more likely that they desired to have the new Grammar School building on School Street, on the dividing line between the two districts. These societies finally united in a petition to the Assembly, which granted their request, making the Little River the boundary between them.[2] This conclusion was reached in May 1761.

The inhabitants of the First or North District did not wait for this action. In 1758, or early in 1759, thirty of the Proprietors, being unable to act as a town or a society, erected the famous Brick School House. The cost was divided among them in equal shares. One of these was conveyed, May 30, 1759, as "one Thirtieth part of the Brick School Houfe now lately built and standing on the Old Meeting Houfe Hill and near the dwelling houfe of Capt. John Lawrence in Hartford." [3] This was in the eastern section of the square. It was the first school-house of the North District, although it was erected as a Parish School before that district was created. James Hosmer, being

[1] *First Ecclesiastical Society Records*, Feb. 3, 1755, Jan. 16, 1756, Feb. 24, 1757, Jan. 24, 1759, and Feb. 13, 1760; *State Archives: College and School*, I: 153 ff.

[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XI: 410, 467, 560; XII: 497; XIII: 337.

[3] *Hartford Land Records*, 9: 502; 11: 245, 256.

seventy-nine years of age, testified in 1830, that when he was a boy of twelve years, he attended school there. The building faced the south, and he was "in the habit of peeping frequently from the school house to the old Williamson tavern." [1] In a deed the building is located about fifteen rods east of the Court House. Its career was brief. In making preparations for the celebration of the repeal of the Stamp Act, May 23, 1766, a quantity of powder in it was ignited and the school-house was blown up. Six young men representing prominent families, died after being escued from the ruins, and many others were wounded. [2] On the following Sunday, Rev. John Devotion of Saybrook, being providentially in Hartford, preached in the North Meeting House a memorial discourse upon the calamity.

The district doubtless made temporary provision for several years, pending the contemplated division of the school funds. The Second North District was set off in 1770. It depended upon rented quarters for some years, but later built near the junction of Ann and Main streets. The First or "Middle District" was given liberty in 1771 to erect a school-house on the northeast corner of the burying-ground. This building was of brick, thirty-six feet long north and south, and twenty-two feet wide. It had a chimney at each end and a partition in the middle. This school-house was sold in 1814. Its successor was the "Stone Jug" school-house on Market Street. The South District experienced delay in erecting its first school-house, because the inhabitants could not agree on a location. As early as 1762, they sought a division into two districts. It is believed that they used the old Grammar School building for a time. In 1769, a district school-house was erected on the South Green. We have entered, however, the era of our modern district system, the history of which has been written.[3] At the time this system was adopted, it was

[1] "Report of the Committee on the Petition of Samuel Olcott," *State Street Papers*, Town Clerk's Office.

[2] Barber's *Conn. Hist. Coll.*, p. 54; *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 213, 214, 236; *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XII: 467; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 298, 299.

[3] "Historical Sketch of Districts," by Supt. Thomas S. Weaver, in *Annual Report of School Visitors*, 1904, pp. 83 ff.

a necessary step in the evolution of better and higher education.

In 1753, Mrs. Abigail Woodbridge conveyed to the town's school committee sixty-five square rods of her home-lot near the corner of Main and Arch streets, for the erection of a new Grammar School building. Here this school was conducted for about half a century. The site is now occupied by the east end of the Municipal Building. The edifice fronted on the highway along the north bank of the Little River, to which it gave the name "School Street." [1] It was the town's most ambitious effort hitherto for higher education. The town's vote to devote thereafter the income of its school funds to this original purpose, gave the enterprise encouragement. In 1672, six hundred acres of land had been granted by the Colony for its benefit. Many years elapsed before this grant was laid out in Stafford. It was not sold until 1776.[2] Tracts of land in Litchfield and Fairfield counties were also bestowed upon it. This school was under the care of a committee of prominent inhabitants, including the town's ministers, to which others were added from time to time afterwards. It had been suggested however in a meeting of the First Ecclesiastiacl Society, January 24, 1759, that a portion of the funds in the hands of this committee properly belonged to the English School. Certain persons were then appointed to treat with them. Perhaps this opinion was entertained elsewhere. In 1765, the town considered the matter, and subsequent votes forecast the final result. A division was made in 1771, and one-fourth of the fund, or £284, was given to the two districts. The residue was set apart for the Grammar School.[3] No doubt that school had failed to meet their expectations since its removal. Titus Hosmer, the son of Captain Stephen Hosmer of the West Division, was the preceptor from 1758 to 1760, when he began the practice of law in Middletown. He was a graduate of Yale College, and the recipient of a Berkeley scholarship. Thomas Seymour's accounts with the school

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 155; 9: 306.

[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 176; IV: 402; V: 462; VI: 548; XV: 448; *Colonial Land Records*, III: 258.

[3] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 209, 212; "Papers Relating to the School Districts," in collections of the Conn. Hist. Soc.

indicate that his successor for a time in 1761 was a Mr. Dean, who has not been identified, unless he was Silas Deane.[1] This distinguished patriot was graduated from Yale College in 1758. After Mr. Dean, perhaps with an interval, Nehemiah Strong, Yale College 1755, became the preceptor and was teaching the school in 1769. He was perhaps followed by John Wright, who begged his patrons in 1771 to pay up, as he was about to leave town. Eleazer Wales, a graduate of Yale College in 1753, and a son of Ebenezer Wales of Windham, became preceptor about 1772 and continued in service for seven or eight years. He had been licensed to preach in 1765. In 1775, he opened an evening school at his house, to teach young men navigation etc. Oliver Lewis came to Hartford in 1780, the year of his graduation from Yale College. He advertised, in September 1781, that the Grammar School was opened, where Latin and Greek would be taught. "A watchful eye," he added, "will be kept over the morals of the youth." In 1783, he advertised a morning and evening school to be kept at the Grammar School building. The hours on Monday, Friday and Saturday, were from 6 to 8.30 o'clock in the morning; and on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 5 o'clock to sunset. He had studied law in Hartford and in 1783 was admitted to the bar. During this period, private schools sprang up in the town. In 1770, John Jeffrey, who had come from Rhinebeck, N.Y., and married in 1766 Sarah Nichols of Hartford, advertised a private school where Andrew Thomson had formerly kept a store. Samuel Holbrook had such a school in 1775. Noah Webster the lexicographer, who is said to have lived and done some of his work where the Robbins building now stands, on the north corner of Main and Mulberry streets, opened a rhetorical school in 1783 for the cultivation of the English language. In 1784,

[1] "Seymour Papers" in *Boardman Collection*, State Library, No. 5561. Brissot de Warville in his *New Travels* says of Wethersfield: "They tell me it gave birth to the famous Silas Deane, one of the first promoters of the American revolution; from a school master in this town, elevated to the rank of an Envoy from Congress to Europe." Mr. Deane was born in Groton, Conn., and we know of no evidence that he taught school in Wethersfield. Perhaps his teaching in Hartford may have been the source of this impression. He is said to have settled in Wethersfield in 1761.

Ebenezer Whiting taught a school in the house of Mr. John Hall. Mr. Lathrop advertised in November 1788, that he had opened a school for young ladies at the large building a few rods south of the printing office. These schools undoubtedly detracted from the public interest in the Grammar School. After the incorporation of Hartford, this interest was revived. Solomon Porter was the preceptor for some years. He resigned in 1792, and George Jeffrey Patten succeeded him. He was the son of Rev. William Patten, pastor of the Second Church, and Ruth, the daughter of Dr. Eleazar Wheelock, President of Dartmouth College. His service ended in 1798.[1] That year, at the town's request and upon a memorial drafted by John Trumbull, Esq., the committee then in charge of this school were incorporated as "The Trustees of the Grammar School in the Town of Hartford."[2] The school was then newly arranged. Its pupils were boys, limited to forty in number. In a list of those examined and approved for entrance in 1798, we find the familiar Hartford names, Beach, Bolles, Bull, Butler, Cadwell, Hart, Root, Wolcott and Wyllys. During the next decade the following Yale graduates were in succession the preceptors: Elisha Chapman, Alanson Hamlin, Thomas Adams, Stedman Adams and Amasa Loomis. The trustees had for some time anticipated the sale of this property and a new location elsewhere. In 1808, they secured a portion of the Seymour homestead, lying between Buckingham Street and the house formerly occupied by Thomas Y. Seymour. Here there was a building standing. It was, perhaps, that referred to in 1807 as the Seymour office. An addition was built by the trustees, and the whole was equipped for the school. At the same time, another portion of the lot was secured. The removal was accomplished in 1809, and the old property was conveyed in 1810 to Daniel Wadsworth. John Langdon of Yale College was the next preceptor. He was succeeded by Isaac Parsons. The school prospered. In

[1] *Memoirs of Mrs. Patten*, pp. 71, 83; *Family Letters of the late Mrs. Ruth Patten*, pp. 257–259. Mr. Patten afterwards founded a Literary Institute in Hartford for both sexes, and kept a school for boys. He died in 1830. His sisters the Misses Patten kept a girls' school from 1785 to 1807.

[2] *Private Laws of Conn.*, II: 1060; V: 514.

1813, another addition to the building was erected. Their school-house had been outgrown, however, in 1828, when Enoch Perkins, Esq., was authorized to secure the building of "a new brick school-house," 54 feet long and 38 feet wide. It was to have two stories and be furnished with desks, seats and a stove. The north front of this edifice was twenty or thirty feet south of the south line of Linden Place. It looked toward the old Seymour house, then known as the Welles homestead. The city had meanwhile opened Capitol Avenue, which divided the school-house lot. The playground was south of it. A lane south of Enoch Perkins's house, which had furnished access from Main Street to the earlier school-house, thus gave place to a city street. The new building of the Hartford Grammar School is remembered by the living. It was here that the desire of the founders of Hartford, to establish a school for classical learning, was worthily realized, after nearly two centuries of struggle, and this school stood near the site that Governor Edward Hopkins had chosen. The sequel relates to recent events. In 1847, the trustees approved a proposition of the First School District to unite with it in supporting a High School. Thus their relations with the classical department of that school were established.

CHAPTER XVII

PHASES OF CRIMINAL HISTORY

It will not be denied that criminal history is one of our best means of acquaintance with social conditions in any age. The standards of virtue, as well as the current vices, are there disclosed. Our fathers kept no such record of crimes as the modern newspaper publishes. The entries made by the courts are very meagre. In some cases written testimony is extant in the State Archives. We have sufficient details, however, in one way or another, to secure a near view of the criminal courts of colonial times, their proceedings and those who were arraigned before them.

The court established by the Commission for a provisional government was the first in Connecticut. It had civil and criminal jurisdiction. The General Court set up by the inhabitants of the plantations, succeeded it. Sessions of a Particular Court were held as early as 1637.[1] Their records begin with 1639. Until 1650, these were kept in the same volume with those of the General Court of the Colony, and are printed with them. Thereafter, they are in separate books and unprinted.[2] The Particular Court gave place, in 1666, to the County Courts. In 1665, the Court of Assistants was established. The Superior Court succeeded this in 1711. These were the criminal courts of colonial times.[3]

The early Particular Court was constituted of the Governor, Deputy Governor and magistrates. In 1642, the presence of either the Governor or Deputy Governor, with four magistrates, was made a quorum. Two magistrates only were required in 1647, or three magistrates,

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 16.

[2] *Particular Court, Vol. II, Probate Records*, 1650–1663; *Probate Records, Book III, County Court*, 1663–1677 — Secretary of State's Office.

[3] *Conn. Reports*, Vol. 53, Appendix by Dr. Hoadly; "Origin of Conn. Courts," by Judge Hammersley, in *N. E. States*, I: 477 ff.; *Report of the Temporary Examiner of Public Records*, 1904, pp. 21 ff.

one of whom presided. Quarterly sessions were adopted in 1642. Trials by jury were customary in criminal cases. The jury might be composed of six or twelve men. Although strenuous efforts were made to secure unanimous verdicts, one could be rendered by four or eight jurymen. A grand jury was provided for in 1643. The judges of this court were obviously the leaders in public affairs. During its existence, the following Hartford men were numbered among them: Haynes, Hopkins, George Wyllys, Welles, Webster, Samuel Wyllys, Whiting, Cullick, Talcott, Mathew Allyn, John Allyn and James Richards. These men were not lawyers, but they were not lacking in qualifications. According to the laws, their decisions were just and wise.

Every magistrate was bound by his oath to assist in the execution of the laws. He was the prosecuting officer in the community where he lived. In 1639 the laws were provided for each town in manuscript. Later, when they were printed, they were accessible to all the people. In fact, a deal that is both true and interesting might be written as to the aptitude of the early New Englander as a student of law. In 1642, twelve capital laws were established. Fines were imposed in the Code of 1650, for profane swearing, lying, petty theft and similar offenses. In default of payment, the offender was put in the stocks or pillory. Sometimes he was whipped. Branding in the forehead with the letter "B" was the penalty for burglary, to be repeated on the second offense, with the addition of whipping. The penalty for a third offense was death. When this crime was committed on the Lord's Day, an ear could also be cut off for the first and second offenses — a provision, perhaps, designed to protect their homes while they were absent at church. Forgery was punishable by standing in the pillory on three lecture days, and double damages to the party wronged. As actions for debt were very frequent, it should be noted that, in the Code of 1650, no person could be arrested and imprisoned for any debt or fine, if satisfaction could be obtained by law from his estate. If imprisoned, he was kept at his own charges until settlement was made. No defense is here attempted of the severe laws of those Puritan times. We must admit the truth of many charges

that have been brought against them. In justice to their court records, it is stated, however, that their magistrates did not inflict, in many instances, the penalties that the law prescribed. Capital crimes were punished otherwise than by death. Some persons were released, after being compelled to stand for a time on the gallows ladder with the noose around their necks. Large discretion was then allowed the magistrates in the infliction of punishment. They were often very ingenious in doing so, and they sometimes made the most of mitigating circumstances. To a surprising degree, their trials reveal the fact that their main purpose was the reformation of the criminal, in which they sometimes succeeded. It was fortunate that their early courts had such magistrates as have been named. During their administration of justice, principles were established and methods of procedure were inaugurated, which continued for many years and, in some cases, throughout colonial times.

As we might expect, there were no misdemeanors in which all colonial courts were more particular than those that impugned the court's own dignity, or the authority of its officers. More than one man of standing in Hartford, was compelled to offer his apologies to the court; nor was his fine remitted when he had done so. Contemptuous speeches about the court and its proceedings, or disobedience of its orders, were punished in a number of instances. One man was fined £50 for resisting an officer of the court. Another was fined ten shillings for not responding to a warrant. A man once dared to say that the court "had given the Constables a Lycense to Lye." In several instances, witnesses who concealed information were punished. The officers of a town were also sustained in their authority. One who offered an affront to the watch, or resisted him, was severely dealt with. In 1646, several rogues broke prison and escaped. Perhaps they had been concerned in a raid made shortly before, by a party of servants, who broke into William Gibbons's house and drank his wine. Gibbons himself gave bonds for the due appearance of some of the party. Those who escaped were concealed by a man-servant and maid-servant in the house of their mistress. The former was

fined £5, whipped and required to give security for his appearance three months later, when he was to be whipped again, unless the Court was convinced of his reformation. The maid was also fined £5, and whipped at the house of her mistress, which was to be repeated in three months unless the Court was informed of her amendment. That was their form of probation, for which they had some justification. A man, who should have known better, was whipped for advising the prisoners not to "peach" on their friends. There were a large number of cases of theft. Some of the offenders were only fined. A man-servant, who had been guilty of immorality, was confined in the house of correction. He was afterwards returned to his master, to be kept at hard labor and on a coarse diet. This punishment did not reform him. He was later convicted of theft. The Court required him to restore four-fold, and he was to be branded in the hand on the next training-day. There were comparatively few cases during earlier years where persons were charged with drunkenness. They increased later. A distinction was made between the various phases of this offense. The fines were in proportion to the fault. Confinement in the stocks was common, if payment was not made. There were cases of profanity, assault, buying stolen goods, taking excessive rates, trespass, Sabbath breaking and the like; but they were comparatively few. In some instances, these offenders were treated practically according to the modern principle of probation. They were put under bonds for their good behavior or reformation. The excess of one man's earnings while he was in the house of correction, over the expenses of his keep, was devoted to the maintenance of his child. In the Court of Assistants, in 1678, a man and his wife were fined for excessive drinking. Stephen Hopkins and John Easton were appointed by the court to see that they behaved themselves — the earliest instance that we have met with of the appointment of probation officers in Hartford. Throughout colonial times emphasis was placed upon the reforming effect of hard labor. This principle was applied as a corrective measure long before they had a workhouse. Murders were rare except among the Indians. Excusable homicide was punished by a fine. The death of Thomas Scott

was occasioned by an accident on the part of John Ewe. He was ordered to pay £5 to the Country and £10 to Widow Scott. On the whole, there were a surprising number of imprisonments for counterfeiting, especially during the later years of their colonial currency. This crime was severely punished.

One misdemeanor that was very common during colonial times, was regarded with particular aversion and punished accordingly. It was slander, or defamation of character, which is rare in modern courts. The attitude of the founders of Connecticut, as expressed in the Code of 1650, was that "no mans honor or good name shall be stained" unjustly. They vested in their courts the protection of such a name, as they did his property rights. The publishing of a lie, "pernicious to the publique weale, or tending to the damage or iniurye of any particular person," was a great injustice. "To deceiue and abuse the people with false newes or reportes," was a public wrong. This was one of their social temptations, as would have been natural among newsmongers. Lying was punishable by a fine of ten shillings for the first offense. In default of payment, one could be placed in the stocks not exceeding three hours. The fine was doubled for the second offense, or a whipping on the naked body, not exceeding twenty stripes, could be administered. For the third offense, the fine was forty shillings, or thirty stripes. Upon each conviction thereafter, there was an increase in the penalty. This was a process that was quite likely to cure the liar in time. The enforcement of this law did not bar any person from an action for slander. Such suits were quite common, and the penalty was usually severe. The fine was as high as thirty pounds. In 1646, the slanderer of Mistress Mary Fenwick was sentenced to stand in the pillory during the lecture, then to be whipped, then fined five pounds, and finally to endure six months imprisonment. The libeler of Mistress Chester in 1649, was committed to prison, to be brought forth and whipped the next lecture day, then to be imprisoned for a month, at the end of which time he was to be corrected again — all in addition to giving security for his good behavior. There were other instances of slandering promi-

nent colonial dames, whose vindication was promptly undertaken by the magistrates. They often displayed an ability to discriminate between neighborhood quarrels and vicious slanders. On one occasion, Goody A sued Goody B for circulating damaging reports about her character. The court, after due consideration, decided that Goody A bore in fact such a character among her neighbors.

The impression prevails that offenses against social morality were scandalously common in colonial times. It is true that such misdemeanors are matters of frequent record. That they are noted in church records is neither surprising nor significant, since public confession and marriage were considered a proper and adequate atonement. Their Puritan standard of social virtue was high. This tended to increase their diligence and severity in dealing with immorality. Their most serious problem was due to the servants among them. These were very necessary to their life, both in the field and the household, but they were hard to control. President Dwight has stated that the founders of New England brought with them "a collection of peasants and servants remarkable for their profligacy." After an examination of the records of New Haven County, he reached the conclusion that this class furnished most of their criminals.[1] A study of the court records at Hartford confirms this opinion. Pains have been taken to follow the lives of certain persons of this class. The fittest seemed to survive. Others of the baser sort perished. The truth is, that the fathers considered the existence of an unmarried class as a menace to the morals of a community. Laws were enacted to prevent such from gaining a residence among them or living alone. Servants were under the strict supervision of their masters or mistresses. It was unlawful for any man to pay his attentions to a maid-servant, with design to inveigle her affections, without the mistress' permission. Cases are on record of the violation of this law. The one remedy in early times for social evils was marriage. Parents regarded it as the proper estate for their children when they arrived at maturity, and it was very common for them to bestow a marriage portion, or the means of earning a liveli-

[1] Dwight's *Travels*, IV: 381.

hood, to this end. This, too, was often the remedy applied by the court.

It has been thought that divorces were rare throughout the colonial period of Connecticut history. Of the seventeenth century this is true, though they increased towards its close. The General Court ordered in 1677, that no divorces should be granted except for adultery, fraudulent contract or wilful desertion, after three years' neglect of duty. It further provided that, after seven years' providential absence, the parties should be declared legally dead to each other. After 1711, many petitions were brought before the Superior Court for this latter reason, and divorces were more frequent on other grounds, although many requests were refused.

The large majority of actions before the colonial courts were, of course, civil cases, such as prosecutions for damages, and suits for debt. For many of these there was good excuse. There was little business system in their transactions. Land at first was sometimes conveyed by "turf and twig," after an ancient English custom.[1] Many were negligent in the immediate recording of their deeds. Contracts and agreements were not always written. Debts were forgotten, and payment was deferred to a more convenient season. All these conditions helped to increase their law suits.

The most serious indictment that has ever been brought against our early criminal courts is for their action in the witchcraft delusion, the explanation of which has been often made and is here left to others. It was an episode in New England history that should be judged in view of similar beliefs then current in the old world. In Connecticut, all the cases where the condemned were executed occurred between 1647 and 1662.[2] They were, therefore, tried in the Particular Court. Of the seventeen in the river towns who were charged with witchcraft during this period, nine were residents of Hartford. Three of these were executed. As the prison where all criminals of Hartford, Windsor, Wethersfield and Farmington were confined was located in Hart-

[1] *Original Distribution*, p. 368; *Hartford Land Records*, I: 162.

[2] *The Witchcraft Delusion in Colonial Connecticut*, by John M. Taylor.

ford, it is probable that the entire number from these towns, which were hung in this delusion, suffered in Hartford. Alse Young of Windsor was the first unhappy victim, but the court records give us no information concerning her trial. On the cover of Mathew Grant's Diary, Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull discovered the record "May 26. 47 Alse Young was hanged." This supplies the blank in Winthrop's *History:* "One —— —— of Windsor arraigned and executed at Hartford for a witch." [1] So far as known, this was the first execution for witchcraft in New England. The next victim was Mary Johnson of Wethersfield. In 1646, she had been sentenced to be whipped for theft, probably at Hartford, which was to be repeated a month later at Wethersfield. On her own confession, she was indicted by a jury December 7, 1648, as guilty of "familiarity with the Deuill." Mather says, "Her confession was attended with such convictive circumstances that it could not be slighted." [2] She confessed, he says, that she had murdered a child, and committed other faults of licentiousness. For some months before her execution, she was imprisoned at Hartford, under the care of William Ruscoe. A son was born to her while there. Nathaniel Ruscoe, the jailor's son, agreed with her before her death to bring up and educate the child, which agreement was afterward sanctioned by the court. The jailor was paid £6 10s. for twenty-four weeks' charges to June 6, 1650, from which fact it is inferred that she was executed on that date. Rev. Samuel Stone ministered to her while in prison, and it is said that she became a penitent woman. She was evidently a poor, misguided creature, who accounted for her fault according to the superstition of the age.

After the execution of John and Joan Carrington of Wethersfield in 1651, and Lydia Gilbert of Windsor in 1654, a witchcraft tragedy was enacted among Hartford residents. It is one story and has been written and published by Dr. Charles J. Hoadly.[3] Nine persons were involved, largely

[1] Annie Eliot Trumbull, in *The Hartford Courant*, Dec. 3, 1904; Winthrop's *History*, II: 374.

[2] Mather's *Magnalia*, Bk. VI, pp. 71–78.

[3] "A Case of Witchcraft in Hartford" in *Connecticut Magazine*, Nov., 1899, pp. 557–561.

through the statements of Rebecca Greensmith. She had been the wife of Abraham Elsen of Wethersfield, who died in 1648. Then she married Jarvis Mudge, and was a widow when she married the unfortunate Nathaniel Greensmith. Those who were implicated constituted a group of local acquaintances, some of whom had a repute for misdemeanors or immorality. Their names were Nathaniel and Rebecca Greensmith; Elizabeth, the wife of Richard Seager; Andrew Sanford and Mary his wife; William Ayres and his wife; Judith Varlett and James Walkley. Of Rebecca Greensmith, Rev. John Whiting wrote to Increase Mather that she was "a lewd, ignorant and considerably aged woman." Her husband had twice been convicted of theft. The court had once censured him for lying. Elizabeth Seager left a record of shameless crime, being guilty of blasphemy and adultery. These were the leaders. The others kept such company. One night they had a merry-making, under a tree on the green near Rebecca Greensmith's house. James Walkley, Goodwife Ayres and Goody Seager were present. They all danced and had a bottle of sack. Other nocturnal gatherings were held. Suspicions were awakened in the neighborhood. Nathaniel Greensmith had a small home-lot, house and barn, recently purchased. It was located just south of our present Barnard Park, on which green the dance of the witches was doubtless held.[1] Complaint had been made to the town that he had set his barn on common land. James Walkley had a house-lot on the north side of the road from George Steele's to the South Meadow. Sanford and Ayres apparently lived on North Main Street. The crisis came in the spring of 1662, with the accusations of a young daughter of John Kelley, uttered in the delirium of sickness. The child died. Immediately, the neighborhood was busy with reports that she had been bewitched unto death. The magistrates examined several of those accused. Nathaniel Greensmith then sued William Ayres for slandering his wife. She and her husband were soon arrested. The defendent Ayres, his wife, and James Walkley, took refuge in flight. Ann, the daughter of John Cole, had strange fits about that time. Her examination

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 91; *Original Distribution*, pp. 268, 269.

by the ministers, Samuel Hooker of Farmington, Samuel Stone, Joseph Haynes and John Whiting of Hartford, only increased the mystery and augmented the excitement. On June 6th, Andrew Sanford was indicted for witchcraft. The jury disagreed. A week later, Mary Sanford was indicted and found guilty. This action furthered the ultimate indictment of Nathaniel and Rebecca Greensmith, which occurred December 30, 1662. They were both found guilty.[1] The woman's testimony implicated her associates. On January 6th, Mary Barnes of Farmington was indicted, and was also found guilty. The tragic scenes, which closed this horrible episode of our local history, can be all too clearly imagined. Mary Sanford was convicted first, and was not long detained in jail. Like some weird spectre of the spirit world, she disappeared. Goodwife Barnes was confined three weeks, for which Daniel Garret, the jail-keeper, was allowed 21s., to be paid by Goodman Barnes. The jailor was also allowed 6s. a week for keeping Nathaniel and Rebecca Greensmith, to be paid out of his estate. His inventory states that he was executed January 25, 1662–3.[2] Hutchinson quotes the diary of Goffe, the regicide, under the date January 20th, as saying "three witches were condemned at Hartford." On this date the Particular Court met. He also says of Rebecca Greensmith: "Upon this

[1] The indictment reads: "Nathaniel Greensmith, thou art here indicted by the name of Nathaniel Greensmith for not having the feare of God before thine eyes; thou hast entertained familiarity with Satan, the grand Enemy of God and Mankind, and by his help hast acted things in a preter naturall way beyond human abilities in a naturall course, for which according to ye Law of God and ye established laws of this Commonwealth thou deserveth to die." The form of the information, used in the Superior Court for many years, assigned all crimes to the instigation of the Devil. The magistrates at this trial were as follows: Mr. [Mathew] Allyn, moderator, Mr. [Samuel] Wyllys, Mr. [Richard] Treat, Mr. [Henry] Woolcot, Danll Clark, Sec., Mr. Jo. Allyn. The jury were: Edw. Griswold, Walter Ffiler Ensign [Nicholas] Olmstead, Sam^{ll} Boreman, Good^{m} [Gregory] Winterton, John Cowles, Sam^{ll} Marshall, Sam^{ll} Hale, Nathan^{ll} Willet, John Hart, John Wadsworth, Robert Webster. The execution of criminals then devolved upon the Marshal, who was Jonathan Gilbert. One of the accused is said to have seen this worthy official in a dream, which seemed to presage the end. He was the first of three appointed to settle Greensmith's estate. Jonathan Gilbert succeeded Thomas Stanton in this office, and was followed by George Grave.

[2] January 25th was a Sabbath, and we can not think the execution would have occurred on that day. Perhaps the court met on the 20th and they were executed on the 23rd, the latter date being incorrectly copied.

confeffion fhe was executed, and two more of the company were condemned at the same time." [1] The scene was doubtless accompanied by the public sensation, common to such occasions in England. It was the last time any witches were hung in Connecticut, and forty years before the excitement over the Salem witchcraft. Elizabeth Seager was indicted on the same day with Mary Barnes, and twice later. In 1665 she was convicted, but the Court of Assistants found a way to release her, after a year's imprisonment. It seems probable that the witches were executed outside of the town-plot, on the road from the Cow Pasture into the Country. There the gallows of early times was located. On March 10, 1711–12, John Read sold to John Olcott a tract of about seven acres, bounded south on the "highway leading out of Hartford town towards Symsbury," now Albany Avenue. It is described in the deed as "near the houfe lately built by Joseph Butler, near where the Gallows ufed to stand." [2] The place is near enough identified as on the north side of the avenue, on the east end of the present Goodwin lot. There, a large elm tree on a rise of ground might well memorialize the place where this tragedy of Hartford's early history was enacted.

The usual place of punishment for minor offenses was in the meeting-house yard. Near the church were the stocks, the pillory and the whipping-post. The stocks was a timber frame in the holes of which the feet, or feet and hands of criminals, were confined. In the pillory, the head and hands were held, the victim being often compelled to stand. To the whipping-post the criminal was fastened while the lash was applied. All these punishments were very common. It was not so much the pain as the disgrace that was depended on for correction. On lecture day, just before the ringing of the first bell, the criminal was put in the stocks or pillory, where the congregation could see him. The passer-by sometimes railed at him, and the children pointed their fingers at him. An old writer says, "The jeers of a theatre, the pillory and the whipping-post are very near akin."

At first, the Colony had no jail. Prisoners may have been committed to the keeping of William Ruscoe. On April 10,

[1] Hutchinson's *History*, II: 17. [2] *Hartford Land Records*, 2: 228.

1640, the General Court passed the following vote: "Forasmuch as many stubborne & refractory Persons are often taken wthin these libertyes, and no meet place yet p^{r}epared for the detayneing & keepeing of such to their due & deserued punishment, It is therefore Ordered that there shall be a house of Correction built, of 24 foote long & 16 or 18 foote broad, wth a Cellar, ether of wood or stonne, according as Mr. Talcotte, Ed: Stebing, Tho: Ford and James Boosy shall Thinke meete, who are chosen by the Courte to lette out the worke, appoynt out the place & to order and directe whatsoeuer occations and businesses that may fall out for the compleate finishing the said house, w^{ch} is to be done by the nexte Courte, in September." The committee located this edifice in the northeast corner of the yard, north of the meeting-house. This was long known as "the prison lot." Here they erected a building, variously called a "house of correction," "jail" or "prison." The repairs made upon it indicate that it was of wood. In 1652, Richard Goodman and John Pratt were appointed "for carrying on the necessary worke about the prison house." The amount to be expended suggests extensive improvements, or a new building. An addition was ordered in 1664, which William Wadsworth and Joseph Fitch were to erect at the Colony's expense. A well was provided in 1692. The lot was enclosed with pales, and some prisoners were given the freedom of this yard. Such inmates as could, maintained themselves in prison. In 1647, William Ruscoe was given 40s. toward his charges for keeping inmates. Some prisoners took with them such articles of furniture as they needed. Others found very poor and uncomfortable lodgings on the floor, or in a prisoner's bunk. Nathaniel Greensmith had there "One Bed well filled," "One Boulster," "One Rugg, one Blankett" and "Two Blanketts," valued at £6 10s. The cellar was utilized for dungeons. Prisoners were kept there in gyves or fettered with chains. In 1679, Henry Green of Farmington, a murderer, died there, and William Edwards was paid two shillings for his burial. Others, doubtless, died in prison at various times. These would most likely have been buried in the prison yard, according to custom. In the author's opinion, the graves discovered on this lot

some years ago were those of prisoners. Daniel Garret succeeded William Ruscoe as keeper in 1654, and continued in office many years. The annual salary was £10. In 1690, Evan Davy was the keeper. He was succeeded the next year by Thomas Hancox, who also had a long term of service.

This early house of correction, with the alterations of nearly sixty years, must have presented an interesting appearance towards the close of the seventeenth century. Within that low rambling building, many prisoners of all sorts had been confined. Some of them made their escape. One of these was the Niantic Indian Moween, charged with murdering a Pequot girl.[1] In 1664, John Scott took his leave, without paying Daniel Garret for twelve weeks diet.[2] William Mathews, convicted of rape and sentenced to death, made his escape in 1693, by the assistance of William Wright, an Indian, and John Rogers Jr. of New London. The confederates were arrested and imprisoned. The latter was also charged with the burning of New London's meeting-house.[3] They were allowed at times to walk at liberty, for which the keeper was censured by the Governor and Council. This prison edifice could not have been very secure, except for criminals in chains or confined in its dungeons. In 1698 the need of a new building was recognized, for which the old site was used. The Court of Assistants authorized Captain Joseph Whiting, treasurer of the Colony, and Captain William Whiting, high sheriff, to provide materials for such a building and do the work at the public expense. The size of this structure is unknown. It was larger than the old prison, and perhaps partly of brick. Three years later, the General Assembly ordered that it be maintained by a rate levied by the County Court. The keeper was then allowed 4s. "for comitment of a prisoner and discharge" and 2s. 6d. a week for the "diet." Many an interesting tale gathers about this prison, often called "Hartford Gaol." In 1722, it was the scene of the famous Hartford Riot, on account of land disputes in the Hop River country. The keeper, Thomas Meakins, refusing to release Captain Jeremiah Fitch of

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, II: 178, 188, 196, 197 n., 213, 232.
[2] *Ibid.*, I: 436.
[3] *State Archives: Crimes and Misdemeanors*, I: 197–201.

Norwich, the door was burst open and all the prisoners escaped.[1] Here some of the Separatists were confined during that religious controversy. On a lecture day in November 1743, Rev. Elnathan Whitman preached a sermon "pervious to y^e^ execution of Jack and Kate, two negroes y^e^ one condemned to die for a rape y^e^ other for murdering her child." [2] Perhaps executions at that time were conducted in the jail yard. John Barnard was then the keeper. During Revolutionary times the gallows stood near the junction of Zachary's Lane, now Vernon Street, and Rocky Hill. The place was called "Gallows Hill." [3] Indeed, the criminal history of that period, which is associated with this prison, would fill a volume and give no very favorable impression of the times.

Meanwhile, a more economical and reformative treatment of certain classes of offenders had found favor. The courts had recognized from the first the wholesome influence of work upon the wayward. It was ordered for some, under masters. In certain instances, it was conducted in the prison. The evils of the times now demanded a work-house. During the first quarter of the eighteenth century, "rogues, vagabonds, sturdy beggars, and other lewd, idle, dissolute, profane and disorderly persons" increased. In 1727, the General Assembly recited these conditions, when a law was enacted providing for a Colony work-house. To this institution the above classes could be committed. The insane, also, could be sent there, and, in 1730, persons sentenced to perpetual confinement were transferred to it. A master was to have charge, and conduct the work done by the inmates. Each of them was allowed two-thirds of his earnings to pay for support and necessary materials. The court might apply all one's earnings to maintain his family. To further the self-support of this work-house, overseers were appointed in 1737. At the same time, the year 1741

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VI: 332, 333, 341, 375; *em. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 78; Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, in the *Hartford Evening Press*, Oct. 1860.

[2] Wadsworth's *Diary*, p. 106; *Hartford County Court Papers* in State Library. The indictments in these as in other similar cases charged that they had been "instigated by the Devil."

[3] *The Hartford Times*, Aug. 8, 1890.

was named as the limit of this experiment.[1] The original act located this institution in Hartford, if the town or proprietors provided land for the purpose. Accordingly, on July 8, 1729, John Edwards conveyed to Nathaniel Stanley, John Austin and John Skinner, a committee of the town, "for y^e^ use of y^e^ Inhabitants and proprieto^rs^," a triangular piece of land containing one-half acre, located on the west side of Trumbull Street.[2] It was originally the northeast corner of Thomas Stanton's home-lot, and is the present site of the Case, Lockwood and Brainard Company building. The above committee were named by the General Assembly to erect thereon a building "of fifty foot in length and thirty-two foot in breadth and fourteen foot between joynts." It stood length-ways on Trumbull Street. To prevent the escape of prisoners and facilitate the work, a yard was made about it in 1737. The Court records give the names and offenses of some who were confined in this work-house. It failed to become self-supporting and, in 1742, the General Assembly authorized the Hartford County Court to transfer its inmates to the common gaol, north of the square, to be kept and employed there as in the work-house.[3]

This institution was revived in 1750, by the law that appears in the revision of that date providing for county work-houses. The old building was put to this use. An additional act in 1753 directed the County Court "to put the same in good repair and order" for this purpose.[4] Other counties, which had no building, were not so ready to comply with the law. At this time Hartford County needed a new gaol. On February 13, 1753, the court therefore ordered the erection of one "near the south end of the work-house," and authorized the sale of its interest in the prison lot or old gaol.[5] This plan was accomplished. Thus the building

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VII: 128–130, 345, 530, 531; VIII: 137–139; *Poor Law of Conn.*, by Dr. E. W. Capen, pp. 61–66.

[2] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VII: 240, 241; *Original Distribution*, pp. 329, 436, 438 n.; *Hartford Land Records*, 5: 132.

[3] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, VIII: 505.

[4] *Ibid.*, X: 159–161, 206.

[5] *Hartford County Court Records*, Feb. 13, 1753; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 184, 216; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 70; 7: 548; 9: 363; 11: 295.

originally erected in 1729 for the Colony work-house, and the Hartford County gaol ordered in 1753, came to occupy the same lot on Trumbull Street — a fact that has caused much confusion. As places of confinement, however, they were distinct. The classes above specified were committed to the work-house, which was conducted as in former times. For this, an assistant and a justice, or any two justices, received final jurisdiction in 1769.[1] Criminals and some others temporarily confined were kept in the gaol. As both institutions were under county authority, there was doubtless an interchange of courtesies between them. In 1785, the sentence of a horse thief was to ride the wooden horse half an hour and receive fifteen stripes in the square, and then be confined "in the gaol and the work-house" for three months, to be taken out every Monday morning for the first month, receive ten stripes and again ride his "oken stud." [2] Apparently, the two buildings were referred to, in some instances, as the gaol, jail or prison. Moll Rogers in 1757, and others at sundry times, escaped from this gaol. In 1764, a plot was formed in Colchester, by one Titus Carrier, to "pull Down, Demolifh and Deftroy it" and release the prisoners. Here, Moses Dunbar was imprisoned in 1777 for high treason, David Farnsworth and John Blair in 1778 as spies and counterfeiters, and Alexander McDowell in 1781 for desertion — all of them hung, probably on Gallows Hill. A yard was built in connection with it in 1776, for the safe-keeping of Revolutionary prisoners, who were confined there during the war. It seems probably that during this period both buildings were used for this purpose.

On February 28, 1792, the County Court, in view of the decayed state and insufficiency of this gaol, appointed Roger Newberry, William Moseley and John Caldwell a committee, with authority to purchase more land, if necessary, to sell, lease or use the materials of the old buildings and erect a new gaol or prison house.[3] Additional land

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, XIII: 237, 238.

[2] Barber's *Conn. Hist. Coll.*, p. 56. In 1775 a man was committed "unto the Keeper of the Gaol . . . within the said Prifon."

[3] *Hartford County Court Records*, Feb. 28, 1792, March 4, Aug. 31, Sept. 18, 1793, June 3, 1794; *The Connecticut Courant*, Oct. 22, 1792.

was bought on the west, the southern part of which was sold, and the remainder, with the old lot, constituted the new prison tract.[1] During the construction work, prisoners were sent to Middletown gaol. The building was "nearly finished" when, on April 6, 1794, it was set on fire by Betsy Goodhue, an insane woman confined in one of its apartments, who perished in the flames.[2] Its brick walls were not greatly damaged. In the autumn it was completed, and its "liberties" round about were defined. The prison occupied the lower part. In the upper stories there was a tavern that was called "City Hall." There had been, probably, such apartments in the former building, for, on February 13, 1792, Jonathan Janes, who carried on the shoemaking business there, advertised "good accommodations for travelers and good keeping for horses at the City Hall in Hartford," fifty rods west of the Court House. This was a unique combination, but it was a convenience to many a poor debtor confined there. There is a death notice of one such, who ended his days "in the City Hall" by swallowing three ounces of laudanum.[3] In those days, many respectable people were sent to the gaol for such reasons, and it is believed that the main purpose and use of this tavern was to give them opportunities for self-support while there. It certainly attained that distinction and was never a popular social resort. Rooms there were occasionally used temporarily as business offices. Here Elias Morgan conducted the drawing of the State House lottery in 1795.[4] Perhaps, also, the County Court met there for a time.[5] This edifice was sold in 1836, to Case, Tiffany and Company, and demolished in 1866 to make way for the widening of Pearl Street and the present Case, Lockwood and Brainard Company building. In 1837, the jail was removed to No. 107 Pearl Street, where it remained until 1874, when it was located on Seyms Street.

Throughout colonial times the relief of the poor was

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 19: 450, 457; 20: 265; Maps in City Engineer's Office, Books 65: 14; 67: 9, 10; 69: 6, 14.

[2] *The Connecticut Courant*, April 7, 1794.

[3] *Ibid.*, June 11, 1798.

[4] *Ibid.*, March 9 and 23, 1795.

[5] "The gaol which has the court house on the top of it is the most elegant building in the city."—John Gerrond's Travels.

The Old Jail, Erected in 1793

conducted by the town, without any institution. It consisted in grants of land, labor, provisions, wood and medical attendance. Besides this, there was much neighborly charity. Children without parental care were bound out. The customs of marriage really relieved social conditions to a large degree. Many a poor widow and her children thus found another home, after a shockingly brief interval of mourning. These children were practically placed out in another home with a new father. The records prove that the results were remarkably good, which should be remembered in a criticism of their marriage customs. With the Revolutionary War, the most extreme conditions of need were soon thrust upon every community, because of the number of men that were absent in the army. The town of Hartford, like others, met this situation with liberal bounties and the extensive practice of out-door alms by a special committee. After the war, there were many widows and orphans to be provided for, and how this relief was accomplished is a matter of wonder. There were also other broken fragments of society, not so easily placed. It is not strange, therefore, that there was a demand for an almshouse where a few could be made comfortable. In 1782, the selectmen were authorized "to build a small Houſe for the uſe of Neil McLean the old Soldier as long as he lives, . . . the same to remain to the Town for a Poor Houſe for the uſe and dispose of the Town." He was probably a French War veteran, for he was known in 1772 as "Old Niel the Soldier." The location of this house was south of the gaol, on the bank of the Little River.[1] This veteran lived only about four months. Probably the town's purpose was carried out, and this was their first almshouse. It was evidently too small for their need. In January 1785, a committee was appointed to memorialize the General Assembly for liberty to erect an almshouse and tax the town for its support. The request was granted, and before the autumn, such an edifice had been erected on the east side of the road to Windsor, on land owned by the town.[2] This site was nearly opposite the North Cemetery.

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 291.
[2] *Ibid.*, MS. Vol. II: 309, 311, 312; *Hartford Land Records*, 18: 290.

The conditions changed, and this property was sold in 1797, to reduce the town's expenses. The value of an almshouse, however, had been proved. In 1812, an act was passed by the General Assembly, upon the town's petition, authorizing it to establish, maintain and regulate a workhouse — a privilege that had been granted earlier to some towns and was extended to all the next year. The town's vote shows that it then had in mind a temporary almshouse and workhouse.[1] The former almshouse on Windsor Avenue was secured for this purpose. There this dual institution continued until 1822. The town then purchased the Kelsey farm, "a mile and a half northwest of the State House." It there established both a work-house and an almshouse.[2] These were in separate buildings, and the old distinction between the two classes and their treatment was maintained to times within the memory of the living.

The work-house as a correctional institution was the product of colonial times — the natural outcome of an early belief in the reforming effect of hard labor for certain classes. Under the successive administration of colony, county and town, it accomplished a valuable service. The measurement of its success by their commercial standard of self-support, and the general neglect of education and training in its treatment of the inmates, impaired its usefulness. Those classes for which it was intended seem to have been clearly distinguished from criminals, on the one hand, and the poor, on the other; and yet there was always the tendency to combine it with their punishment of the former in the jail, and their charity for the latter in the almshouse. The fundamental principle of their work-house has been adopted for good by modern reformatory institutions. It has also been departed from for evil, by the indiscriminate commitment of certain classes to our jails.

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. III: 56, 65, 69, 83.
[2] *Ibid.*, MS. Vol. III: 102, 103, 105.

CHAPTER XVIII

TRADE AND SHOPS

The early emigrants to New England were well aware of their dependence upon trade for subsistence and development. They also thought it would be profitable. It is doubtful if they realized how little they would have for export, and how much they would need for themselves. Their descendants can hardly understand what it must have meant to them to begin life anew under primitive conditions. In their homes there were few of those temporal luxuries, common in an older civilization. Much of their diet was new. The scant supply of goods necessitated care and economy in their dress. They must have missed, most of all, some of those common tools, implements, utensils and other articles of farm or household use, so easily obtained in England. With these, their inventories show they were poorly supplied. These were the things they used most, and that wore out soonest. Such circumstances, however, were not on the whole detrimental to New England life. Necessity thus put them in the way of using their own resources. To bring manufactured articles across the sea, they must send over their own products, or find a market elsewhere. It was a fortunate circumstance that beaver skins found such favor in England. The settlers profited greatly by the demand for pipe staves in the West Indies. With these and a few other products, they established an export trade. As time passed, they obtained by this means the things they had left behind in England. Nor was this all. Their need of many articles stimulated them to invent simple devices in their place, just as a camping life does to-day. What they could not thus provide, they found ways of getting on without. This tended to simplicity of life. Their needs resulted, also, in perpetuating, through apprentices, the trades in which some

of the early generations were skilled masters. So, the chair or chest of a colonial ancestor stands for something more than an ancient pattern. It represents achievement. Above all, these circumstances were the means of developing home industries, by which many of their essential needs were supplied during colonial times. The old spinning-wheel is not a mere curiosity. It is an emblem of that era of American manufactures, in which the skill and diligence of women were important factors. Such industries were economically, socially and morally a great blessing to colonial homes. Leaving much to the reader's general acquaintance with the subject, we turn to the particular features of trade and shops within the town of Hartford.

The General Court, on July 5, 1643, granted liberty for a market to be held at Hartford weekly, on Wednesday, "for all manner of comodityes that shall be brought in, and for cattell, or any marchandise whsoeuer." The land records locate the site of this market at the southeast corner of the meeting-house yard. It is mentioned as a north bound of Jonathan Gilbert's purchase in 1663. In 1645, the Court also granted liberty for two fairs to be kept yearly at Hartford, upon the second Wednesday of May and September. The purpose of these occasions can be best understood through an introduction to contemporary English customs. "A fair," says Brand, "is a greater kind of market, for the more speedy and commodious providing of such things as the place stands in need of. They are generally kept twice a year." [1] Thomas Warton states that "antiently before flourishing towns were established and the necessaries of life, from the convenience of communication and the increase of provincial civility, could be procured in various places, goods and commodities of every kind were chiefly sold at fairs: to these as to one universal mart, the people resorted periodically, and supplied most of their wants." [2] Such were the conditions in the river towns. Hartford, being the center settlement, was thus selected as a place for weekly trade. We are not to consider this market, therefore, as merely an early ex-

[1] Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, II: 453.
[2] Warton's *Hist. of English Poetry*, 1840, II: 55 n.

ample of that institution known later by that term. It was the same kind of an occasion the settlers had known in England. One might call it a great country store, kept for a day in an open area, where "all manner of comodityes" would be likely to find a customer. Thither the surplus of their produce, herds or looms was brought, and presumably many second-hand articles. As they had at first no stores, it was a public necessity, as well as a convenience. Probably the early traders of Hartford sold goods there. This custom was maintained for many years. The market-place is mentioned in a deed of 1763. Fairs were revived, generally, that year. Jonathan Trumbull petitioned the General Assembly for a fair at Lebanon, stating that "Fairs and Markets are found Beneficial & serviceable to facilitate the Transaction of Business." A similar petition for one at Windham expressly appeals to the English custom and its advantages. As shops and stores increased, however, this early market in Hartford came to be devoted to the sale of such produce as could not always be sold elsewhere. It is certain that this ancient privilege of periodical traffic in the square, or near the bridge, continued to quite recent times. It survived within the memory of many, in the sale of poultry in the square at Thanksgiving time. It is said that the drop curtain of a theatre or circus, long ago established in the rear of the American House, "represented the old State House and grounds, with farmers and their carts and oxen in the foreground on Central Row." The people seem to have regarded this as an inherited right. One reason given for the establishment of the bridge market, built in 1811 upon an arch on the west side of Main Street bridge, was the obstruction of the highway at its south end by the wagons of venders, who gathered there to sell their merchandise. This public need resulted later in the erection of the city's markets.[1]

When their early market or fair was established, there were in Hartford several merchants, who had in their homes or outbuildings such articles as were used in trade or were sold to the settlers. Their early traffic was with the Indians for corn or beaver skins. The General Court

[1] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 368; *Hartford Land Records*, 22: 98, 466.

sent out its agents to obtain corn. In 1638, the exclusive right to trade for beaver on the river was given to certain individuals. William Whiting and Thomas Stanton secured it for Hartford. Governor Hopkins obtained a special privilege of trade at Warranoke in 1640. Traffic with the Indians on Long Island was restrained in 1642, though Thomas Stanton and Richard Lord were allowed to make one voyage. The settlers were then in need of articles and goods, which they hoped to secure in the older colonies. Protests were made, however, by Massachusetts and Plymouth, that their markets were being overfilled. Hence, Connecticut traders sought a foreign market. In 1644, an agreement was made with Governor Hopkins and William Whiting, by which they were to pay a fixed price for corn, and have the sole privilege of transporting it to foreign parts.[1] This restrictive policy prevailed for years. Such Hartford merchants as acquired particular rights under it were profited. As export trade increased, they were the first to win its rewards. Comparatively little progress had been made in 1680, when answers were asked to certain queries of the Committee for Trade in England.[2] It was reported that there were then only about twenty petty merchants in the Colony. A few of these lived in Hartford. They had little traffic abroad. Provisions were sent to Boston or New York, and goods were received in return. Their products were occasionally shipped to Barbadoes, Jamaica, and other islands of the West Indies, in exchange for rum, sugar, and cotton wool. Trade with the Indians was then of little value. In 1730, the Colony again answered the queries of the Board of Trade in England.[3] Their trade was then reported as small. Horses and lumber were being exported to the West Indies. Goods for clothing, nails, scythes, pewter, brass and fire-arms were obtained in American ports, for provisions, tar and turpentine. In 1747, the General Assembly passed an act for the regulating and encouragement of trade. It placed a duty upon goods, wares and merchandise above the value of fifteen pounds, imported from other American colonies, and offered a

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 116, 117, 119.
[2] *Ibid.*, III: 294 ff. [3] *Ibid.*, VII: 580 ff.

bounty for such importations from Great Britain and Ireland. Another act provided for a duty upon lumber exported to neighboring governments.[1] The next year a protest was made by various merchants, among whom were Daniel Goodwin, John McKnight and Benjamin Payne of Hartford. It resulted in the suspension of the importation act.[2] As the years passed, their trade increased slowly, but Hartford was surpassed by other towns of the Colony. Its era as a commercial port did not arrive until after the Revolutionary War.

At an early date, there were some small vessels, owned, in part at least, by Hartford merchants. The joint building of a ship by the towns was proposed in 1642. One was owned at Wethersfield in 1649. The inventory of Rev. Thomas Hooker, dated the latter year, notes that he had a venture abroad in the *Entrance*. This may have been the name of the pinnace, in which his friend, William Whiting, owned a part interest, valued at £40. A ship of that name was "of Hartford," later. At his death in 1662, Richard Lord owned one-sixteenth of the *Society* and one-eighth of the *Desire*. It is said that his son Richard Lord and John Blackleach bought the ship *America* in 1669, and it was then in the Connecticut River.[3] In 1680, only one ship was registered at Hartford. It was of ninety tons burden. Probably this was the *Hartford Merchant*, which Lord and Blackleach bought in Boston about 1676.[4] Major Jonathan Bull, at his death in 1702, owned one-half of the sloop *The Two Brothers*, and one-half of the sloop *The Bonneta*. Other Hartford merchants during this period probably had similar interests. In 1730, four vessels were registered at Hartford as follows: Sloop *Mary*, 60 tons, Captain David Williamson, master; sloop *Rebeckah*, 40 tons; sloop *Hampshire*, 18 tons; and sloop *Tryal*, 35 tons.

[1] *Ibid.*, IX: 283–287.

[2] *Ibid.*, IX: 393–395; *State Archives: Trade and Maritime Affairs*, I: 135.

[3] *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 319 n. As the ship *Mary and Elizabeth* was of Hartford in 1671, it is conjectured that the owners renamed the *America* after their wives; that Richard Lord subsequently sold his interest to Giles Hamlin of Middletown, and that this was the ship of the same burden registered there in 1680.

[4] *State Archives: Private Controversies*, II: 34, 44.

Captain Jonah Gross commanded a sloop named the *Tryal*, in 1709. At his death in 1745, he had an interest in the *Rebeckah*. John Caldwell owned two-thirds of a brigantine in 1734. The report of 1730 states that two sloops had been recently built at Hartford, one of thirty tons and another of ninety tons. The latter was then being loaded, to be sold with her cargo at Bristol, England. These were probably built at the ship-yard on North Meadow Creek, where others had been earlier and many were later. The Colony's vessels increased from 74 in 1756, to 114 in 1761, and to 180 in 1774. Of these Hartford had a fair proportion for a river port. Several local merchants and ship captains had an interest in vessels that were engaged in the coast trade. In 1776, the following Hartford merchants petitioned for some relief from the taxes assessed upon their idle vessels: Daniel Goodwin, James Church, Samuel Olcott, James Caldwell, Samuel Marsh, Nathaniel Goodwin and John Chenevard.

A closer acquaintance with the town's early merchants may be obtained through their inventories. William Whiting was one of the most prominent. In 1646, he and Governor Hopkins complained of wrongs done them by the Indians, who had stolen their goods and burned their warehouse. This building was probably located on the south bank of the Little River, near the landing. Their joint ownership suggests that they may have used it in connection with the exportation of corn, according to their agreement. William Whiting died in 1647. His inventory indicates that he had commercial interests abroad in England, Piscataqua, Virginia, Warranoke and Long Island. In a room or closet of his house, he seems to have kept a stock of goods for the purpose of trade. In wampum he had £39 9s.; in beaver £10 4s., and in ammunition and gunpowder £7 10s. He had "2 Racoone coats, 1 Wolf skin coate, 4 Bear skinns, 3 Mooss." Another item of "beauer, mooss and wampum" amounted to £250. Of articles used in trade, he had hoes, hatchets, shoes, nails, pins, paper, shot, fish-hooks, blades, looking-glasses, pewter, bottles, brass ladles, brushes, bells, thimbles, boxes, knives, scissors, combs, "Jewes harps," brass kettles, etc. His

dry-goods were "shagg cotton, stockings, hollands," "25 yards greene tammy" and "13 peeces of duffles." The "howsing and land" of William Whiting in Hartford was valued at £400, and the same in Windsor at £300. The total of his inventory was £2854, and it was the largest estate that had been probated in Hartford at that date.

Another early merchant was Captain Richard Lord. He had a warehouse in which he stored grain, soap, salt, lime, pitch, deerskins, whalebone, cotton wool, axes, shovels, spades and forks. A supply of kettles, brass, tin, wooden and earthen vessels, trenchers and pewter ware, he kept in the great closet of his house. At the time of his death he had debts due him in the surrounding towns, in New London, Norwich, Long Island, Delaware Bay, Newfoundland, Barbadoes and England. He died in 1662, at New London. His epitaph pays him this tribute:

"To Marchantes as a Patterne he might stand,
Adventring Dangers new by Sea and Land."

His son Richard Lord was also a prosperous merchant, and was lost at sea in 1685. Such goods as glasses, nails, scales, dimity, cotton and woolen yarn, he kept in a shop on his premises. In an "old warehouse," he had sugar, tar and old iron. He also had grain and tar in Ensign Stanley's warehouse. Debts were due him at Haddam, New London, Narragansett and Antigua. In due time his son Richard Lord became a very wealthy merchant, dying in 1712. He had a warehouse at Mill Cove, New London.

There were also in colonial times some inland traders, such as would now be termed "peddlers." These were often enterprising, shrewd and thrifty men. Along the highways of travel, and in remote settlements, they carried on a remunerative trade and amassed considerable property. John McKnight of Hartford thus began his career. He came from Glasgow in 1738, bringing with him English goods, valued at £60 sterling, "which he travelled with and Disposed of in this Colony." After two years experience as a trader, he was associated with Robert Sloan, a Hartford merchant. Then he went to New Haven, where he built two ships of about two hundred and fifty tons each, and was clerk of the company that extended Union or Long Wharf.

Later he returned to Hartford. At one time he had large means, and gave financial aid to the government; but he suffered through the depreciation of old tenor, and by being "unhappily bound for another man." In 1774, he petitioned the General Assembly for a peddler's license, intending to return to his early occupation.[1] When he died, in 1785 at East Windsor, the *Courant* termed him "an eminent trader," to which his extant account books bear witness.

The method of conducting local trade in colonial times, was largely by the exchange of produce for the wares of the shopkeeper, or the labor of the mechanic. As early as 1662, the town had a sealer of measures, and a sealer of weights was chosen in 1687. Old-fashioned steelyards were owned in nearly every home. All kinds of produce had a certain standard of value; and this varied very little during long periods. Ledgers, or account books, came to be kept in most families. Some of these have been preserved. At a convenient time, and often after a long interval, two parties would meet, compare their charges against each other, and the debtor would pay the balance in cash. This they called a "reckoning." In many instances, a record of the settlement was made on their books, and signed by both parties. Rev. Daniel Wadsworth, for instance, notes in his diary the fact and date of his reckoning with Robert Sloan, at his "shop," which was then on the north side of the square, where Captain Hezekiah Collyer afterwards lived. A certain shoemaker's ledger, covering the period from 1770 to 1784, shows that he was paid for shoes in walnuts, butter, sugar, salt, milk, wheat, rye, wood, various kinds of meat, cider and rum. Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth discharged part of his debt with molasses; Colonel Wyllys by recording two deeds, and Dr. Solomon Smith by medical attendance. Rev. Nathan Strong turned in, on his account, beef and veal; and Josiah Clark six chairs.

Throughout the entire colonial period, trade was conducted, occasionally, on the decks of vessels, lying in the river or at the landing. The reasons are obvious. A *Courant* advertisement on December 29, 1766, announces the sale of codfish, ironware, powder and shot, on board the

[1] *State Archives: Revolution*, V: 22.

schooner *Squirrel*, Ephraim Bartlet, master. The next December, the same master advertised a sale on the sloop *Industry*. Perhaps, he was accustomed to winter at Hartford for this purpose. In 1770, Enoch Reed, on board the sloop *Tender* lying at Hartford Ferry, advertised to buy flaxseed with rock salt. He was probably gathering a cargo for Ireland. There, also, the same year John Updike, on board the *Dolphin*, bought wheat. The schooner *Peggy* sold English goods at the same place in 1785. Such traffic illustrates the methods of early traders in their ventures abroad. It tended, in Hartford, to concentrate trade at the landing. This the warehouse perpetuated. Such buildings were used generally for grain, iron, flaxseed and bulky merchandise. After King Philip's War, there was a gradual separation between export or river trade, and local traffic among the inhabitants. Thus the storekeeper claimed the business of the earlier trader.

This advance was partly due to the development that had been going on, meanwhile, among the town's craftsmen. Nearly all the early settlers followed husbandry to some extent; but many of them worked at their trades. There was work for the carpenter, mason, blacksmith, shoemaker, tailor, tanner and glover. We know that these and other trades were represented among them. Their work was at first carried on in the home, or in a small building adjoining, called a "shop." William Kelsey had a "working-shopp" on his lot in 1652.[1] Peter Bassaker was a smith, and made nails by hand. Such were sometimes called "nailers." In 1646 he had a shop on the north side of Pearl Street. He profanely expressed a hope of meeting some of the members of the church in infernal regions; but he appears to have met them the next lecture day, as they passed him in the pillory.[2] His shop went to his creditors. Nicholas Desborough was a carpenter or cabinet-maker, though he was afterwards accused of being a witch. His home was on North Main Street, near the tunnel. In 1660, he asked the town for liberty to build on the highway next his fence a shop sixteen feet square. His request was

[1] *Original Distribution*, p. 449.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 311, 395; *Conn. Col. Rec.*, I: 168, 169.

granted. A committee was appointed in 1683, to assign Ebenezer Lewis a place to build a shop "for his trade of a smith." He also located near the tunnel. Doubtless, he used the smith's tools, which his grandfather William Lewis had secured from John Holloway and had willed to him.[1] Such instances might be multiplied. Thus the shop where an artisan plied his trade, became a factor in the town's business life. Desirable locations were sought near the bridge, or along the banks of the riveret, and elsewhere. Such as built upon their own lots, often located in front of their houses, near the street. Sometimes their shops encroached upon the highway. As new houses came to be erected, especially on the square or Main Street, their builders yielded to the fashion, and, in their lower front rooms, many of the stores of later years were kept, as the records and advertisements prove. The rest of the house was occupied for household purposes. It was natural for these craftsmen to keep for sale those articles that their trade produced. Thus, the silversmith became the jeweller; the printer, the bookseller; and the tanner, the leather dealer. Instances are known where the produce such craftsmen received for their work led them, also, to become grocers. In this way, shopkeepers were multiplied. Nor was it long before others, who had no trade, seeing the opportunity, established stores for the sale of such merchandise as they considered profitable. The more enterprising of these pushed out into the highway of traffic. In front of their shops they hung out the ancient swinging sign, with some symbol or name upon it. Thus, the town's main highways assumed a different appearance. The broad expanse of green, traversed by roadways and shaded by ancient trees, continued about the same; but along its sides, old farm-houses, which had defied innovations for many years, began to disappear. Newer houses, which were much better adapted for stores, were erected in their places. Quaint little shops were built in front of, or near those, that remained. As if to invite trade, their swinging signs bowed in the breezes to every passer-by; and the paths that led

[1] *Hartford Town Votes*, 1: 202; *Original Distribution*, p. 72; Manwaring's *Hartford Probate Records*, I: 331.

to their doorways witnessed to their success. It was a picture not so different from some to be seen now in old English towns.

The reader would, perhaps, become better acquainted with this business life of Hartford, if he were conducted along its main highway, as it was about the close of the colonial period. In general, the land records give us the names and location of residents along this street, and glimpses of their shops. Some buildings were erected by permission upon another's land, for which no lease was recorded. There were old homesteads that had adjoining shops, which were rented, from time to time, to various parties. Much may be gathered concerning their shops from advertisements in *The Connecticut Courant.* We have, also, to assist us Barber's "Plan of Main Street" during the Revolution, made with the assistance of certain aged men of his day.[1]

Let us set out from Amos Hinsdale's tavern, near the corner of Wyllys Street, and make Buckingham Street our next station. Mr. Hinsdale was by trade a wheelwright, and worked some as such. He acquired this property in 1745, and lived there many years. In 1775, his neighbor next north was Captain Daniel Sheldon, who bought there in 1765. Beyond him, Ebenezer Crosby lived. Here, Consider Bowen had a shop later. He sold it in 1789, to Nathaniel S. Benton. Farther north, the property was undeveloped on the east side of the highway, then called the "Country Road." On the west side of the South Green, there was an open field. North of this, in 1774, William Adams, a shoemaker, had a small one-story shop. This was the southernmost lot of a tract owned by the Second Ecclesiastical Society. In 1636, about four acres here, extending north to the road from George Steele's to the South Meadow, were distributed to John Moody. His grandson, John Moody, sold the tract, in 1691, to the Second Church. It then had an "old houſe & Barns" upon it. The church committee, at the Society's desire, conveyed it, in 1696, to Rev. Thomas Buckingham, from whose son, Joseph Buckingham Esq., by the deed of his

[1] Barber's *Connecticut Historical Collections,* pp. 48, 49; *The Hartford Times,* March 21, 1912; *Crossing the Connecticut,* p. 16.

mother, Mrs. Ann Burnham, it returned as a gift, in 1762, to the Second Society. In view of the Society's purpose to lease this property, Barnabas Hinsdale made a survey of its several lots in 1774, with sketches of the houses upon them.[1] On the lot next north of Adams's shop, there was a large two-story house, with chimneys at either end. It was that "once proposed to be given" to Rev. William Patten, at his settlement in 1767, and was called the "parsonage house."[2] Here Mr. Patten resided some years. On the north, there was a vacant lot. In 1783, Jonathan and James Steele, Jr., located on the south half, and Asa Francis on the north half. The next house was leased, in 1777, to Dr. William Jepson. It was a small two-story tenement, probably correctly represented in Hinsdale's sketch. Here he kept a shop for the sale of drugs and medicines, and practiced his profession until his death. His inventory furnishes a reliable list of his stock.[3] This is a good illustration of an early drug store kept in the lower front room of a residence. On the north, there was a small gambrel-roof house, with a chimney at one end. This was the home of Barzillai Hudson, a mason by trade, who secured a lease of it in 1774. At the same time, Ebenezer Watson, a printer, and the publisher of *The Connecticut Courant*, acquired the corner house, where the South Church now stands. Barber's plan indicates that this had been the home of "Parson Buckingham." Here, also, his son, Joseph Buckingham, Esq., had lived. According to the sketch, this was a two-story house of the usual pattern, with a large central chimney. Ebenezer Watson died September 16, 1777, and his widow, Hannah (Bunce) Watson, married February 11, 1779, her neighbor, Barzillai Hudson.[4] The house in the

[1] Dr. Parker's *History of the Second Church*, p. 126.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 130; *Hartford Land Records*, 18: 353; 19: 518.

[3] The list of Dr. Jepson's drugs and medicines contains 136 items. He had a large assortment of bottles of various kinds, mortars, ladles, boxes, etc. A set of instruments for amputating, another for trephining, a case of dissecting knives, a set of teeth instruments, a case of five lancets, seven catheters, a case of couching-needles and a syringe are mentioned. His medical library contained 52 volumes. The Doctor had a horse, harness, sulky and saddle. These items give a good representation of the physician and surgeon at the close of colonial times.

[4] Ebenezer Watson, son of John and Bethia (Tyler) Watson, was born, May 1, 1744, in Bethlehem, Conn. He married, (1) Oct. 1, 1767, Elizabeth, daughter of

rear was leased in 1774, to Elisha Burnham, a blacksmith. In 1825, this corner again returned to the Second Ecclesiastical Society.[1]

Proceeding northward to the Little River, there was, on the east side, the homestead of Captain Aaron Bull, a prominent South-side man in his day. He was one of the seven or more residents on Main Street, who had followed the sea. Barber calls him "Sea Captain and Shoe maker." His house was lately razed, being the well-known "Joseph Whiting house." The lower east room was called, in 1793, a "shop." Here, or in another building on this lot, Epaphras Bull once made and sold copper ware. Next north, was the Freeman Gross homestead. There had been, and perhaps was in 1775, a shop between it and the Richard Burnham house, farther north. It was bought from Mr. Gross in 1737, by William Adams, "cabinet maker." He sold it, in 1739, to Isaac Tucker, who was of the same trade. In 1743, it passed to Michael Burnham. The brook, elsewhere mentioned, flowed underneath this shop. In front of the Burnham house there was a blacksmith shop. Michael Burnham, the son of Richard, had asked the town's liberty, in 1732, to erect a shop at the west end of his father's house, one and a half feet upon the highway, and the width of the house. Richard Burnham was a blacksmith. In 1738, when the father conveyed his homestead to his son, he also gave him this "blacksmith shop" and his tools. This illustrates their custom, of erecting such shops in front of their homes. In 1753, William Hooker secured Michael Burnham's lot. Barber calls him "Old Will Hooker, Butcher and Blacksmith." His inventory in 1794, proves the statement. The butcher shop was on Arch Street.

Richard Seymour of Hartford. She died April 11, 1770. He married, (2) Aug. 1, 1771, Hannah, daughter of Aaron Bunce (*John Watson of Hartford*, by Thomas Watson, pp. 17, 24; *Hartford Land Records*, 14: 191; 21: 451). Barzillai Hudson son of William and Sarah (Fobes) Hudson, was born in 1741, in Bridgewater, Mass. He married, (1) Margaret, daughter of Zebulon Seymour of Hartford, a cousin of the first wife of Ebenezer Watson. These relations, doubtless, led to their occupation of adjoining houses. Hannah Hudson died Sept. 27, 1807. Barzillai Hudson died Aug. 1, 1823 (Orcutt's *Hist. of Torrington*, p. 723; Mitchell's *Hist. of Bridgewater*, p. 201).

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 21: 451; 22: 83, 324; 43: 342.

This homestead passed, in 1773, to Joseph Reed, who sold to Ezra Hyde the southern half, where the Thatcher house now stands. The northern half, on which Hooker's "old house" stood, was confiscated during the Revolutionary War, when Reed joined the enemy. In 1781, the State sold it to Enos Doolittle. North of this, Abraham Beach had bought, in 1762, from his stepfather, Dr. Jonathan Bull, one-half acre, and established there a grocery and dry-goods business. He offered this property for rent in 1765, with his "new dwelling-house," having a "fine store under the whole." The next year he sold, and William Hooker acquired it for a home in 1770, before selling his old homestead. It passed to Dr. Daniel Butler in 1782. Mr. Beach became a well known Episcopal clergyman.[1] He is said to have been the author of the prospectus of *The Connecticut Courant* in 1764. The homestead of Jonathan Bull was farther north, on the corner of Sheldon Street. On the west side of this section, Barber locates "Elisha Burnham's Blacksmith's shop," near Buckingham Street. Next north, was the Gideon Bunce homestead, so-called for several generations. Beyond this, Isaac Tucker bought land, in 1755. His shop had previously been in Cooper Lane, perhaps the one that formerly stood on the northwest corner of the Cone lot. His son Isaac acquired this property in 1769, and, until 1775, resided there, conducting a blacksmith shop. He was a soldier in the Revolution, and was killed in the battle of White Plains. The apparent excess of smiths may be accounted for by the demand for nails and other iron work, in later colonial times. Farther north, was the homestead of Rev. Elnathan Whitman, the lot extending to that of Thomas Seymour, Esq., where the school-house and horse sheds had stood in the highway. Next north, there was a shop, where Dr. Daniel Butler advertised to sell drugs in 1784. The following year, Colonel Miles Beach, silversmith, opened a shop there, at first with Isaac Sanford, and later with James Ward. His house was in the rear. Beyond the home of Samuel Howard, where Norman Butler in 1781 sold dry-goods, was Butler's Tavern, and then Elm Street, with its riverside shops and

[1] Dexter's *Yale Biographies*, II: 446–449.

tanneries. Such was Main Street on the south side, after one hundred and forty years — a country road in truth, with some ancient houses, none of which were highly ornamental, and a half dozen scattered shops.

Going northward from the bridge to the square, we enter a busier section. On the east side, the corner lot had been sold by Mrs. Abigail Woodbridge, in 1750, to Timothy Shepard. She reserved an old house, which was succeeded by the home of Timothy and Josiah Shepard. In 1753, she sold the lot north of this to Ebenezer Balch, from whom it passed, in 1755, to James Caldwell, a sea captain. His house was partly devoted to trade, later. Charles Caldwell had a house here, which he sold in 1765 to William Gardiner. He removed his store from Exchange Corner to this house, and sold there English goods, china and glassware. At his death in 1766, from injuries received in the school-house explosion, this property passed to Benjamin Payne Esq., a lawyer. During the Revolutionary War, there was a store here, probably the one commonly called "the red store." Here, Kelliger and Tisdall, William Seymour and Daniel Jones and Co., were successively tenants. The north part of this lot was owned later by George Merrill, who in 1793 sold to Oliver Ellsworth, with his right in a twelve foot gangway, separating this from the home of Rev. Nathan Strong on the north. Beyond this, was the one-acre lot, which Mrs. Abigail Woodbridge sold in 1733 to Rev. Daniel Wadsworth. This had originally been a part of Elder William Goodwin's home lot, which extended south to the bank of the Little River.[1] It was also called the "Way Lot." On its north end the Wadsworth homestead was located. It is now the site of the Wadsworth Athenaeum. North of this, on the Flagg property originally owned by John Steele, Deacon Ezra Corning, in 1766, acquired from Samuel Olcott and John Chenevard one-half acre, with a mansion-house. Here, for many years, he carried on an extensive trade as a shoemaker. The owner next north was Stephen Meers, of whom Barber says, he had "various trades." He sold English goods and exchanged them for homespun woollens.

[1] *Original Distribution*, pp. 23, 24, 513, 15, 60; *Hartford Land Records*, 1: 155.

In 1772, he sold the southern part of his lot to John and Aaron Bradley, who came from Guilford. Aaron Bradley conducted here, in 1775, a shop for horseshoeing. In 1776, this property passed to William Ellery. It had then a dwelling-house upon it. North of Meers' store was the Flagg tavern. Just beyond it, was the store of Captain Thomas Hopkins, one of the best known in Revolutionary times. It encroached upon the highway. Here he sold English and India goods, sugar and spices. Barber calls him a "sea captain," as he also does John Chenevard, whose house was located on the north, where the Times Building now is. In 1769, Mrs. Margaret Chenevard sold wine, chocolate and snuff there. Next, on the north, was the homestead of John Butler, whose wife Susannah survived him. On the south part, which was leased to Hezekiah Merrill, Daniel and George Merrill erected, about 1773, a "Merchants Shop or Store," partly in the highway. It was twenty-two feet in breadth and forty feet in length, with its end toward the street. At this "new store," Dr. Hezekiah Merrill conducted the business of an apothecary and bookseller. He bought this property in 1775. The next year George Merrill succeeded him. His sign was the "Unicorn and Mortar." The unicorn was an ancient emblem of booksellers, and the mortar was considered appropriate for the druggist. It is sometimes seen now. A few years later, Hezekiah Merrill acquired the north part of this homestead, "with an old Manfion" upon it. The house had disappeared, when he conveyed the lot in 1789 to Oliver Ellsworth, with one-half the gangway on the south. The present wooden building was erected by the grantee soon afterwards. On the corner where the Hartford Trust Company Building now stands, Allen McLean had a shop in 1765, and advertised tamarinds for sale. Later, Dr. Neil McLean claimed this property, and it was occupied by Amasa Jones, a storekeeper. It became the site of John Caldwell's store.

On the west side of Main Street, near the bridge, Captain John Skinner kept a shop for some years. His house was so near the highway that his piazza encroached upon it. Here, and elsewhere, he made sales at auction, sometimes,

doubtless, at the sign-post, as his predecessors had.[1] North of Wells Street, was the homestead of William Stanley, his house being located on the southern portion of the lot originally distributed to his ancestor, Sergeant Thomas Stanley. West of it were his outbuildings. He died in 1786, and his real estate eventually passed to the Second Ecclesiastical Society. In 1701, Nathaniel Stanley had conveyed three roods at the north end of the original tract, next to the burying-ground, to his son-in-law, Nathaniel Hooker. South of this Hooker lot, in a building on William Stanley's land, Thomas Green and Ebenezer Watson established the third home of *The Connecticut Courant*, the location being described as "near the Great Bridge." Green became interested with his brother Samuel in New Haven in the autumn of 1767, and removed thither the following spring, leaving the management of the *Courant* to his partner; but he retained his connection with the newspaper until 1771. In 1768, they probably bought a building here that had been used for shops, as portions of it were afterwards. It was a two-story building, with north and south entrances. The first floor of the north side, or more likely of another building connecting with it on the north, was occupied in 1772 by Enos Doolittle, who made, cleaned and repaired clocks and compasses. The building of Green and Watson was about opposite the southwest corner of the Morgan Memorial. They were the owners of it in 1777, when Ebenezer Watson died. His inventory included "Half the Shop Belonging to Green & Watson—£30." It also mentioned Watson's interest in "The Printing Room over Mr Doolittle's Shop—£30." As there were shops below, the *Courant* office occupied the second floor of both buildings.[2] From the accounts of the

[1] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, III: 111; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, I: 299.

[2] Watson's inventory gives valuable information concerning an early printer's possessions. "At the Printing office: 1 Printing Press, £20–0–0; 11 Pair Printing Cafes @ 15/—8–5–0; 2 Large frame for Dº 20/, 7 Small Dº 35/—2–15–0; Half the Shop Belonging to Green & Watson—30–0–0; The Printing Room over Mr. Doolittle's Shop—30–0–0; Lye Trough 24/, Iron for Sign 10/—1–14–0; Large Iron Kittle 7/, Iron Pot 7/6—0–14–6; Iron Pounder 8/, Small Iron Kettle 2/—0–10–0; Blanks 3–10–0, Accompt Book 30/—5–0–0; Old Wrighting Desk 8/, Iron Skillet 1/6—0–9–6; 37 Ream Printing Paper @ 10/—18–10–0; Saw 2/, 6 Small Gallies 9/, 2 folio Dº 6/—0–17–0; 1 Long Dº 2/, Salmons Gazetter 4/—0–6–0; 3 Chairs

administrator, Barzillai Hudson, we learn that it had become necessary to remove these buildings, and they were sold, at a loss of £45 to the estate. This was probably soon after 1782. That year, Barzillai Hudson and Enos Doolittle acquired this portion of the Stanley lot, being one-third of an acre. There was then only a small building, recently erected for a barber shop, between the Stanley home and the printing-office. The purchasers divided this tract into four lots. The owners going north were, George Burnham, who sold in 1785 to Daniel Hinsdale, a former tenant of the printing-office; John Dodd, Barzillai Hudson, and Enos Doolittle. The old buildings on the last two lots were soon removed. Hudson then erected a new building, in which the *Courant* was published for many years. A conveyance of 1792 describes this lot as that, "whereon the printing office now occupied by Hudson and Goodwin" stands. Its frontage was nineteen feet, and its depth fifty feet. Probably the building was narrow, and stood with its gable toward the street. It was removed in recent times. North of a ten foot passway, Enos Doolittle also erected a new building upon his lot. There he lived and carried on his trade as a clock-maker. Specimens of his work have survived.[1]

7/, 4 Compofing Sticks 48/—2–15–0; Twine 4/, Bank 4/, old Slice & Handirons 2/6—0–10–6; All the old Printing Types Belonging to the office — 50–0–0; New Types Lately Imported from Philadelphia — 161–0–0." At Watson's house he had a "Map Lexington Battle." He also owned one half of a paper mill, with the house and land valued at £475, 16 s. Paper was early obtained at Christopher Leffingwell's mill in Norwich. The *Courant* was suspended for lack of it from Dec. 11, 1775 to Jan. 15, 1776. In the summer of 1775, Watson bought a mill site at "Five Miles," now Manchester, and, in company with Austin Ledyard, established a paper-mill. Here the *Courant's* paper was made. This mill was burned on the night of Jan. 27, 1778, it was thought by an incendiary. Widows Watson and Ledyard petitioned the General Assembly for help in rebuilding it, and were granted the privilege of a lottery. In 1779, it was again in operation. Elisha Babcock, later a Hartford printer, was, perhaps, running it. He acquired an interest, which he sold in 1780 to Barzillai Hudson and Daniel Butler, it being the mill set up by Watson and Ledyard. A *Courant* advertisement in 1782 indicates that there were then two paper-mills in Hartford, apparently under the same management. It is said that one was set up at Buckland in 1780, by Richard L. Jones. Hudson and Goodwin erected one at Burnside in 1789, where paper for the *Courant* was made many years. *State Archives: Industry*, II: 159, 160; Goodwin's *Hist. of East Hartford*, pp. 154–158; *Mem. Hist. of Hartford County*, II: 250–252; *Hartford Land Records*, 13: 300, 361; 14: 191, 215; *Rec. State of Conn.*, I: 503, 5,49, II: 197, 198.

[1] Lyon's *Colonial Furniture of New England*, p. 255.

The tenants of the old printing-office changed frequently. There Cotton Murray, a "tailor from Boston," made men's clothes of leather, as well as cloth, in 1770. The next year Edward Dodd, Jr. sold English goods there, and rum also. In 1776, and for several years, Deodat Williams, a goldsmith and jeweller, and George Burnham, in the same business, were tenants. The same year, Nathaniel Patten, a book-binder and stationer, established himself there. He removed, in 1777, to a shop north of the Court House, where he became a publisher about 1780. In this building, Lynde and Marble from Worcester, in 1777, opened a shop for the sale of drugs and medicines, and Josiah Blakeley had a store. He advertised, in the newspaper printed on the floor above, that he had gunpowder for sale. These shops must have been small, and some of them in the rear. The printing-office was one of the town's landmarks. Advertisers referred to it in locating their shops as they did to the North Meeting House or the Bridge. The building long occupied by Peter Lux was formerly known as the Doolittle place, and the printing-office was just south of it.

On the home-lot of Nathaniel Hooker there were buildings, when he acquired it, with a well, trees and a garden. When he died in 1711, he had a shop there, in which he sold dry-goods, and also a "shop warehouse." The widow, Mary Hooker, married John Austin, another early merchant. Her son, Nathaniel Hooker, inherited the homestead and the business. At his death in 1763, the property passed to the widow, Eunice Hooker, and the son Horace. In the shop, Benoni Chalker was a tenant in 1765. Here, or in another building on the premises, Henshaw and Hamlin, braziers and pewterers, were established in 1767. Among the tenants during the Revolution, was Josiah W. Gibbs, who sold knives, forks, linen, shoes, etc. He advertised, in 1775, that he had escaped from Boston and set up a shop at Mrs. Hooker's, the next door north of the printing-office. Later, a new shop was erected and occupied by Daniel Hinsdale. Stephen Austin, a tailor by trade and a dry-goods merchant, acquired the north part of the Hooker lot before 1775, and kept a store there during the Revolution. In 1782 he sold to Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth. The

place then had upon it a brick mansion-house, stores and other buildings. Next north of this lot, Nicholas Brown, a chair or chaise and harness-maker, was established in 1769. He advertised, in 1771, that he was building a stage-coach for the accommodation of passengers from Hartford to New Haven. He bought this place in 1773. When the war broke out, he advertised it for sale. He had then a house, shop and barn. John Thomas secured the property, by execution, in 1783, and two years later Nicholas Brown, then of Shelburn, Nova Scotia, quitclaimed it. Along its north side, there was a passway to the south door of the meeting-house, for which part of the Hooker lot had been taken.

North of the First Church property, the ancient cemetery then extended for some distance out to the street. The history of this tract has been exhaustively studied by Mr. Albert L. Washburn, and nothing need be added to printed authorities.[1] Near its northeast corner, the town gave liberty, in 1771, for the erection of the school-house elsewhere described. The vote states that it was "south of the Barbers Shop in the Posfesfion & Occupancy of James Mookler." This "noted and well accomplished artist" was an Irishman, who came to Hartford before 1758, and that year married Sabra Center. His shop was on the first floor of a rented building, near the south line of the Lord lot, which extended from the burying-ground to Pearl Street. On December 5, 1765, his memorial for a "place" was before the town. Probably this was without immediate results, for, in 1771, when the school-house was located, he was granted liberty to erect an addition to his shop on the burying-ground "next to Mr Lords Lott." He was granted six feet and took about twice that. This property passed, in 1786, to Prosper Hosmer.[2] In the old shop Mookler

[1] Washburn's Study and Plan in *The Hartford Times*, Oct. 4, 1899. See also "The Ancient Burying Ground of Hartford," by Mrs. Emily S. G. Holcombe, in *Connecticut Quarterly*, IV: 73 ff.; Hoadly's "List of Burials," with Notes by Miss Mary K. Talcott in *Connecticut Quarterly*, IV: 180, 264, 417; V: 118, 186, 242, 290, 336, 382, 426, 481, 520; *The Hartford Courant*, Feb. 4, 1893, Feb. 6, 1895, Nov. 21, 1899, March 29, 1905, May 16 and 29, 1912; *The Hartford Times*, Dec. 11, 1896; Nov. 1, 1897, Oct. 31, 1898, June 17 and Oct. 4, 1899, Nov. 5, 1902.

[2] *Hartford Land Records*, 14: 353; 16: 354; 17: 18, 19, 151, 491; *Hartford Town Votes*, MS. Vol. II: 208, 236, 237, 317.

was located in 1768, when he warned his customers to "make immediate settlement or expect Trouble," as he was going on a voyage to Europe. He advertised his shop in 1769, as "within a stone's throw of the North Meeting House." Barber was told by Mr. George Goodwin, the senior editor of *The Connecticut Courant*, who was then in his eightieth year, that "he commenced his apprenticeship with Mr. Green, at the age of eight or nine years, in his office over Mooklar's barber's shop, the first printing office in Hartford." [1] This must have been, therefore, the first home of that ancient newspaper. Its issues from October 29, 1764, to March 25, 1765, inclusive, state that it was published "at the Heart and Crown near the North Meeting House," and it probably continued there until the week following its issue of May 6, 1765. Mr. Albert C. Bates has suggested that the device on the headlines of the early numbers was copied from its sign, as the cut displays both heart and crown.[2] One item in the inventory of Ebenezer Watson was, "Iron for Sign." Thus little is left to the imagination in picturing the birthplace of the *Courant*.

North of Mookler's shop, on the lot of John Haynes Lord, there were several small buildings used for shops. One was rented in 1768, by Robert Currie, a cabinet-maker. Another was occupied later, by Ebenezer Austin, a goldsmith, formerly with James Tiley on King Street, and, in 1782, at Mrs. Chenevard's, near the State House.[3] Barber assigns a third to William Gove, called "Old Gove," a shoemaker. Thomas Hilldrup was in one of these in 1775.

During the Revolutionary period there were several shops on the road from "Lords Corner" to the prison, now Pearl Street. In 1778, John Hill, formerly with Charles Wright, at the next door to Widow Collyers, sold leather breeches, at the sign of the "Cock and Breeches," on the south side of the street. Ely Warner had advertised the same goods, in 1775, at the gaol, and William Smith at his shop a few rods north of it. On the north corner at Main Street, was the

[1] Barber's *Conn. Hist. Coll.* p. 49. [2] *The Hartford Courant*, April 3, 1912.

[3] Austin advertised for sale in 1782 "The whole Apparatus of a Gold-Smiths and Jeweller's tools— conſisting of large and ſmall Anvils, Hammers of all sizes compleat, large Bellowſes, Patterns and Drafts of all kinds of work, including the whole Articles to carry on the Buſineſs."

home of John Nevins, "cooper and butcher." William Imlay secured a lot west of this in 1778, with a shop upon it, which had been occupied by Captain Hugh Ledlie. Mr. Imlay had married Mary, the widow of Joseph Church and daughter of Robert Nevins. North of the Nevins home, was the store of James Church, where the State Bank now is. On the second floor of this store, "opposite the Court House and next door to Mr. Bull's Tavern," was the second home of *The Connecticut Courant.* It was published here from May 13, 1765, to December 5, 1768. Its sign was still "the Heart and Crown." Along Central Row there were also shops, some of them concealed in the rear to this day, as elsewhere shown. At the southeast corner of the square, Ebenezer Barnard dealt in horses. In the same locality, Bavil Webster was established in 1780, as a printer, being "a few rods south of the State House," or "southeast of the Court House." Several publications about that time bear his imprint. In 1783, he issued *The Freeman's Chronicle* or *American Advertiser.* Some prominent merchants were located on State Street, known in colonial times as "King Street." On the south side, Lathrop and Smith were established in 1763. In 1770, Smith and Coit succeeded them, and Dr. Solomon Smith conducted the business, alone, from 1778 to his death, in 1786. Dr. Smith was one of the prominent physicians of the town. His shop was that of an apothecary, or druggist and bookseller. On the southwest corner of State and Front streets, was the store of Caleb Bull, kept later by James and Hezekiah Bull. Captain John Keith's homestead and shop were on the northwest corner. He died in 1775. West of this, was the shop of James Tiley, where William Tiley had been. The former was a well-known goldsmith and jeweller for many years. This building is still standing. After the Revolution, the trade in this street increased, and other shops were erected. At the present west corner of Market Street, there was a small building occupied by John Lawrence, treasurer of the State from 1769 to 1789. Here he conducted the Continental Loan Office. His home and that of his son William Lawrence, a storekeeper, farther west, are often recalled. Beyond this, was the Edwards home-

stead. The one or more shops on the premises were favorite locations for business before and during the Revolution, as the advertisements prove. This is also true of the Collyer homestead west of it, where both dry-goods and wet goods were sold.

In 1775, the residents on the highway from Exchange Corner northward, called in colonial times "Queen Street," had just begun to appreciate the advantages of their location for trade. The succeeding generation witnessed great changes. On the corner, George Smith, a sea captain, had a mansion-house, shop and warehouse, in 1762. These buildings were devoted to business. Here John Morgan kept his store, until he removed to Morgan Street. North of this, on the east side of the street, was Dr. Normand Morrison's homestead. Beyond, was the store of Captain Caleb Bull Jr., who sold dry-goods and provisions. The early location of Gardner and Jepson was next. The latter succeeded to the business, his sign being also the "Unicorn and Mortar." He removed thence to the Southside, and Dr. Richard Tidmarsh located here. This was one of the several places where Thomas Hilldrup repaired watches and kept the post-office. Richard Shepard, a tailor, had a shop north of this, perhaps the same where Caleb and Ebenezer Moor sold laces and fringes in 1776. Timothy Phelps, whose home was next, was a cabinetmaker, and probably worked at his trade on the premises. The north part of his lot passed, in 1784, to Dr. John Endicott, but he may have been a tenant earlier. In 1783, William Moseley acquired a lot north of this, and in this neighborhood, where Colonel Samuel Talcott occupied his ancestral home, we find Jeremiah Platt, Pelatiah Pierce and other merchants, toward the close of the Revolutionary War.

On the west side of Queen Street, north of Bull's Tavern, there were in 1775 several homes of farmers, who still continued the early uses of their lots. The first was owned by Captain Samuel Wadsworth. His house stood on an embankment said to have been eight feet high, near the north corner of Asylum Street. He had a barn and cowyard on the west. Joseph and William Pratt were living on the lot that had been in the possession of that family since the

settlement. Here Thomas Sloan, whose earlier location had been on the south side of Pearl Street, had a blacksmith shop. Zachariah Pratt, also a farmer, was north of him. Beyond was the Maynard Day lot, on which Thomas Converse had earlier erected a shop, being on the west side of "the Broad Street." Here Converse and Stone made and sold breeches, at the "Sign of the Breeches," in 1770. Presumably it was here, also, that Thomas Converse advertised in 1771 to sell English and India goods. Cotton Murray was located here in 1773. Dr. Eliakim Fish bought one rood at the southeast corner of Samuel Day's lot in 1774, and erected there a house. North of this, part of the Day lot was sold in 1776 to Moses Morse, from whose son Moses it passed, in 1784, to Captain William Bull, with the house and buildings. Here he had a store. Perhaps this is where Barber locates Dr. Lemuel Hopkins's shop. The Olcott lot was next. Here, Joseph Olcott sold, in 1759, three acres to Charles Caldwell. Part of this was sold, in 1762, to the committee of the Episcopal Church. North of this, Charles Caldwell sold a lot, with a dwelling-house and shop, in 1763, to Samuel Mattocks of New Haven. In 1765, he advertised as a wig-maker. He became a captain in the Revolutionary War, and his son John a governor of Vermont. About 1780, Cotton Murray opened here a tavern "at the sign of the Globe," which he kept for some years. After passing the Talcott and Wadsworth properties, with which the reader already has some acquaintance, we may fittingly end our journey.

At the close of Hartford's colonial history there was scarcely a building in the town devoted to trade that could be called either spacious or ornamental. The larger stores usually had several tenants. Most of them were small wooden buildings, occupied by the shop-keepers of earlier times. Those that survived into the nineteenth century were then considered insignificant. It is evident, however, that the location of Hartford, which rendered it comparatively safe from dangers during the Revolutionary War, greatly augmented interest in its business life. After that struggle was over, it stood on the threshold of an opportunity, for which it had waited one hundred and fifty years.

CHAPTER XIX

HOMES OF COLONIAL TIMES

The New England colonists of the seventeenth century were remarkably successful in their home-building. This ability had been credited to their race in those times. The Englishman, though cast away on a lonely island like Robinson Crusoe, soon surrounded himself with many of the conveniences of civilization. Whatever may have been due to this instinctive trait, their high conception of the family as essential to social welfare, their appreciation of the home as the source of many ennobling joys, and the loving industry they lavished upon it, were very important factors in the success of our forefathers. The truth disclosed in the records is that most of the original settlers of the River Plantations, who did not suffer from sickness or disaster, and lived to the natural limit of their years, secured good estates and comfortable homes. To a remarkable degree, they founded families that are worthy of honor among their widely scattered descendants, for intelligent piety, high morals, persistent industry and heroic service.

It is proposed to study the colonial homes of Hartford. We have no pictures of them as they appeared in their best days, but so many details are given in deeds and inventories, that we may gather a fairly intimate acquaintance with them and their surroundings. We can not now obtain admittance by tapping on the oaken door, walk leisurely through the family's hall — that living-room for which every Englishman had an inborn affection — and inspect the furniture of their various apartments; but we know very well the several plans, after one of which all those houses were built, and through their inventories, we can determine the general size, number of rooms and arrangement within. In some instances, a good estimate can be made of the proportions of an ancestor's hall, and a list of its contents can be given to a reverent

descendant to arrange. So we lack but little, after all, of visiting them in their colonial homes, to appreciate which, let us humbly admit, the unrest of this age, our materialistic ideals and modern luxuries have largely unfitted us.

What was the ideal of home in the minds of these Puritan settlers? Their success should be measured by that. They did not come from lordly halls. The majority were of the middle class, of good families, but unaccustomed to large houses and a luxurious life. To the average Englishman of those times, the house was a habitation in the midst of a tract of land, with trees, shrubbery, flowers and gardens, if not also fields. Such surroundings were necessary to fill out for him the ideal of a home. Some of the emigrants are known to have sold such properties in England. That country was then a realm of rural life. It had few cities. So it was natural that, to each original settler, there should be distributed a tract of about two acres "for a houſe lott." This was soon developed and recorded as "a parcell on which his dwellinge houſe now standeth wth other Outhouſes, yards & gardens." He had owned this tract long enough, in "Febr: Anno: dom: 1639," to construct this home. When John Allyn, in 1655, bought Edward Elmer's home-lot, it was particularly described as having "outhouſes, barn, yards, orchards & gardens therein." Orchards and gardens are frequently added in later records. They became adjuncts of most homes. Often the place where a settler had thus established himself was termed his "home lot" — a significant and appropriate designation, to cover all that was included in an Englishman's ideal of home. If he, or his descendants, sold the place later, it was often termed in the deed the "homestead." These ancient homes in the country are so designated now. Until commercial life began to wander from its earlier centers, Hartford was a town of such homesteads. A visitor from abroad refers to it as having "broad ſtreets, trees on the ſides and handſome houſes." On the west side of the country road, between Pearl Street and the Little River, there were only four family residences when the town was a century old. Few streets of that length had more. They were scattered everywhere among the trees within the town-plot. In

The Isaac Bliss Homestead

time, these rural features began to disappear. We have now only a few colonial houses in Hartford. Most of the survivors are greatly altered, and none of them conveys an idea of the original surroundings.

The familiar picture of the Isaac Bliss homestead best illustrates the general appearance of these colonial homes. It stood on the west side of Trinity Street. In 1786, its location was given as at the west end of the street leading from the Great Bridge toward the Upper Mills, on the south side of the Little River. Here Zebulon Seymour acquired part of the Mygatt lot, and, in 1733, sold a small tract to Daniel Bull, who added another purchase on the south of it, in 1738. He also acquired, at the latter date, part of Robert King's land on the north. This was Daniel Bull's homestead. He probably erected his house soon after his first purchase. In 1762, he was living there, when, on account of business embarrassments, he mortgaged his home to William Bayard, a merchant of New York. The property was never redeemed, and it was one of those confiscated by authority of the General Assembly in 1780, Colonel William Bayard having "joined the enemies of his country." The next year, John Lawrence, Treasurer of Connecticut, sold it to Colonel John Broom. There was then upon it a dwelling-house, barn, shop, tanhouse and other buildings. This owner sold the property in 1786, to Isaac Bliss, a tanner, who lived there many years. Through a painting of it, recently presented by his granddaughter, Miss Charlotte Tyler, to the Connecticut Historical Society, we have an illustration of a colonial home, dating from the first half of the eighteenth century. It remained without material alterations to times when some of the living remember its old-fashioned and comfortable appearance, with its gardens, shrubbery, trees and outbuildings. The Bliss elm in West Bushnell Park survives to mark the location. A famous spring under the hill supplied this homestead and its tanvats with water. It is said to have been connected in recent times with a drain emptying into the Little River.

This early ideal of a home did not demand a large house. The dug-outs of the pioneers were for temporary use. They began at once the erection of houses. Some of them were

of logs, built to serve until a more convenient season. When they had erected frame buildings, these were utilized as barns. Log houses continued in use during early years among the poorer settlers. They were of small size — perhaps about twenty or thirty feet long — with a chimney at one end, and a thatched roof. Probably Richard Lyman was living in such a house, at his death in 1641, as his inventory names no rooms, and he had on hand "squared tymber, planke & board" necessary for a framed house. Some of the early framed houses were small, only a story, or a story-and-a-half, in height. They had a chimney in the middle. On one side, was the hall or living-room; and, on the other, the parlor, sometimes called in such houses a "chamber," being used for that purpose. There was a low lodging room or "loft" above, lighted by small end windows. It was reached by a narrow stairway in front of the chimney, at the foot of which was the main doorway. From the inventories of William Spencer, Seth Grant and Robert Day, who died early, it seems probable that they occupied such houses, expecting doubtless to build greater shortly. The rule, however, for those who had means, was to erect two-story houses. These were generally accepted as models for many years. It is evident that Timothy Stanley, William Whiting, Rev. Thomas Hooker, William Pantry, John Talcott, Richard Lord, Rev. Samuel Stone, Edward Stebbins, Nathaniel Ruscoe, Gregory Wolterton and others, who died before King Philip's War, had houses of this type, with perhaps a leanto added, or alterations made after the original house was erected. The leanto appeared as early as 1643, and probably earlier. It served such a useful purpose in providing a kitchen, buttery, or closet, and kitchen-chamber, that it found general favor, especially with increasing families. Such houses had a great central chimney, with a fireplace on one side for the hall, and on the other for the parlor. With a leanto, a kitchen flue was added to the chimney, sometimes providing a brick oven. The front door opened into a small entry, called a porch, whence there was a stairway to the second floor, and another under it to the cellar. The porch occasionally projected, with a gable above, as in the house that Barber in his *Historical Collections*,

has attributed to Rev. Thomas Hooker. The room above this porch was his study. It was often called a "porch chamber," or "little chamber." On the second floor, there were usually two chambers, named, according to their location, the "hall chamber" and "parlor chamber." Often there was a fireplace in each. The garret, also, was sometimes furnished with a bed, and always used more or less for storage, especially of grain. On account of the projection or "overhang" of the second floor, the upper story rooms were slightly larger. A few inventories mention rooms that suggest another arrangement, or an addition to the house. In most cases, this was occasioned by a division of certain large rooms with a partition, anticipating the four room plan of later times. In Rev. Samuel Stone's house, we find a study with a fireplace, but there was no such provision in his hall chamber. He evidently divided the latter room into two, using the rear one, which had access to the chimney, for his study. Sometimes this room was called the "middle chamber," being between the little hall chamber and the chamber above a leanto kitchen. The inventory of Richard Lord, who died in 1662, refers to a "Little Chamber over the Hall," which apparently had no fireplace. It also mentions a "Middle Chamber over the Hall," which was furnished with andirons. In some larger houses, the hall itself was divided. John Pantry had an "old parlor" and a "new parlor." The house of Rev. Thomas Hooker had the same rooms. Over each, in the pastor's house, there was a chamber in connection with which the chimney is mentioned. There was apparently no such accommodation in either his hall or hall chamber. As the chimney could have served only four rooms of the main building, we conjecture that his new parlor was the rear of the divided hall, as in other instances. Probably it had a fireplace, though none is named in his inventory made two years after his death, when there may have been another arrangement of furniture. There were no beds on the first floor of this house. The pastor's books were doubtless kept in his study over the porch; but it would be strange if he used that small room in the winter time, with a snug apartment below, like his new parlor. This arrangement

was precisely like that in Mr. Stone's house, only the teacher used the second floor.

The records furnish little information concerning the size of these early houses. The report sent to the Committee for Trade, in 1680, states that their buildings were generally of wood, though there were some of stone and brick, "many of them of good strength and comelynesse" for a wilderness. The following added words were crossed out in the record: "many 40 foot long and 20 foot broad, and some larger: three and four stories high." These dimensions were not far from those of the town's larger houses at that date. A journal speaks of the removal of one in 1775, exactly that size. Messrs Isham and Brown, who have made a thorough and interesting study of *Early Connecticut Houses*, have given us the measurements of some that have remained to recent years. The dimensions of the Robert Webster or Dorus Barnard house, erected in 1660 and standing until 1899, on Retreat Avenue, were about 40 by 20 feet. The Captain John Barnard house, erected near it about 1680 and surviving to recent years, was 40 feet 4 inches long and 32 feet 7 inches wide, including the leanto. These represent the larger mansions. The majority were smaller. We should expect this of one story houses, but some of two stories, in which large families dwelt, were of small proportions. The leanto, if it extended the entire length in the rear, and was from ten to fourteen feet wide, added considerably to the size, both in capacity and appearance. In houses that had only a hall and a parlor on the first floor, the rooms were sufficiently spacious to display no little dignity, notwithstanding their low ceilings.

It is sufficient for our purpose to deal in a general way with the materials of these early houses, and the manner in which they were constructed. The volume above cited is an admirable text-book for further study. The red sandstone quarried along the Little River was a desirable material especially for underpinning and their large chimneys. The ease with which it could be obtained, and its convenient flat surfaces, rather than a scarcity of brick, accounts for its general use in early Hartford. From the beginning, bricks

were put into chimneys. In 1639, John Gennings was allowed for sweeping "6^{d} for bricke & 3^{d} for Clay." Their framing timbers were hewn, often in the woods and hauled by oxen to their house-lots. Plank and boards were prepared at the saw-pit. William Goodwin established the first sawmill on the Hockanum River. He early acquired land there, but, at what date his mill was in operation, is uncertain. In 1654, he was granted liberty by the General Court to take timber from waste land, "to keep his sawe mill in imployment." The property passed to his son-in-law, John Crow; but it is doubtful if this mill was of large assistance in early building operations. John Allyn had a saw-mill on the same river, in 1672. The framing of these colonial houses has always won admiration. It demanded great labor, and was well done. For the average settler, it was the most difficult part of house-building. Surviving examples represent, however, the better class of dwellings. All early houses were not so well built, and, in comparison, did not stand long, as the records prove. The house frame being set up, most of the work on the walls could have been done by the settler himself. Between the studs or posts, they filled in with bricks plastered on the sides, or, when the walls were boarded, with clay. In New London, they sometimes used seaweed, and other materials were doubtless utilized in Hartford. Wide horizontal weather-boards, set close with bevelled edges, are thought to have been the rule in the outside finish of early framed houses. Clapboards were used on better buildings, nailed directly to the studs. Their roofs were steep and shingled. The floors were of wide and thick oak, or hard pine boards. Doors were usually plain. The windows were small. At first, wooden shutters were generally used, probably protecting an inside window of cloth or oiled paper, which admitted the light. For the better houses, window-frames were provided, leaded with small diamond-shaped panes of glass. These frames were at first brought from England. Early houses must have varied greatly in their inside finish. The poor had always plenty of our red clay, mixed with a wiry meadow grass. This was skillfully used in those times, and gave an interior the appearance of a plastered house. Uncovered beams and

studs — into which they drove wooden pegs on which to hang their arms, hats or garments — were a relief to the interior. Houses of the wealthier inhabitants, especially their halls and parlors, were sometimes lined with unpainted wainscoting. Such a hall might have been very attractive, with walls to which the escaping smoke of a blazing fire had given the hues of age, and furnishings of antique pattern, which many of them contained.

It is well known that the prevailing plan of colonial houses changed with the advance of years. The view that the land and probate records reveal connects these changes very closely with the internal prosperity and social conditions of New England during certain periods. As the conquest of the Pequots in 1637 awakened new life in the Colony, so did their later wars. Large and costly houses built before King Philip's War were few, and were owned by the wealthier families. The leanto was an addition. One who needed more room sometimes erected an extension to his house. After that war there was a revival of interest in house-building. Many early houses disappeared. Most of the original settlers, who had been content with pioneer conditions, had died. Their children had entered into the rewards of economy and thrift. The houses of the new era were much the same in interior arrangement, but they were generally larger, and the division of rooms was more common. In the rear we have the long, sloping roof covering the leanto, which had become an integral part of the house. The middle of the eighteenth century witnessed another revival of building interest. Homestead lots within the town were divided up. On outlying farms, new and better houses were built. The increase of wealth and trade also exerted an influence. Commercial intercourse between the river towns and other colonies introduced new fashions. The gambrel-roof house then found favor. It had a central hall-way, with rooms on each side and end chimneys. An ell for a kitchen was often added. This plan continued in vogue for years after the Revolutionary War, and until the introduction of those classic features that have been attributed incorrectly to colonial times. Throughout these changes, their houses preserved, as a rule, that plain and

unpainted exterior, which was in harmony with their Puritan taste and fashion.

The inventories of colonial times show that housekeepers differed in the use they made of similar rooms and hence in their furnishings. In small houses without a leanto, the hall was their kitchen and dining-room. Richard Seymour had such a house, the "out room" being used as a kitchen and dining-room and the "inner room" as a chamber. The house of John Maynard, afterwards owned by the Day family, had two stories. At the former's death in 1657, the kitchen and hall occupied the first floor. Above each, there was a chamber. In the hall he had "one long Table, one short table, 6 Joynd stooles, Two cubberds wth Irōware and oth^{r} implements wth one Mufket and sword, 3 books." Additions made for cooking purposes altered the interior of their halls. The parlor was usually provided with a bed, presumably the best one, as it was assigned to guests; but the mention of other articles indicates that this room was put to general uses. Their most valuable furniture is often found in it, with their best clothes, linen, dishes and personal treasures. The contents of second floor chambers was limited, and much the same in all houses. In Rev. Samuel Stone's parlor chamber the furnishings were "a liuery Cubboard, Andirons, Bedsted, 2 Chests, cushions, Curtaines & Valions, Boulsters and Pillowes, Brushes, blancketts, Goods, Broadcloth searge, earthen ware, Two sadles, Napkins, Table Cloath, sheets, pillow Beers, Towels, glasses, a wheel & reale, and a press." The chamber over Rev. Thomas Hooker's old parlor contained "a featherbed and boulster, 2 pillowes, a strawbed, 2 blankitts, a rugg, and couerlitt, darnix hangings in 7 peeces, window curtaines, curtaines and valence to the bed, a bedstead, 2 chaires, and 3 stooles, andirons &c in the chimny, & a courte cubberd, curtaines and valence to the same bed of green say, and a rugg of the same, with window curtaines." Trundle-beds were common in such apartments, and greatly needed where there were large families of children. Such beds continued in New England homes to recent times.

The furnishings of these houses, at least in early years, were very plain and not so costly as some have thought.

From England they brought chests filled with sheets, pillow-biers, blankets, rugs, table-cloths, napkins, towels, curtains, cushions and the like. Most every family had one or more chests. Wealthier settlers unquestionably brought some furniture. All of them came provided with certain kitchen utensils, kettles, pewter dishes and implements necessary in their simple culinary service. It is evident, however, that some of their early furniture was of home manufacture. The inventory value of such articles varies greatly, in comparing the poor with the rich. We know, also, that there were skilled cabinet-makers among them, who could never have made a living on their lands. It was not long before these and other artisans supplied some of their needs. Most of their stools and forms were home-made. These were commonly their seats, according to the custom in England. In the inventories of seventy-five householders from 1641 to 1659, Dr. Irving W. Lyon found only one hundred and fifty chairs. Some poorer families had none. Such rare specimens as he shows in his volume on the *Colonial Furniture of New England*, were the possessions of the wealthy. The average family may have had a few treasures brought from an ancestral home; but, for the most part, the settlers of the first generation were content with the simple furniture that could be readily secured, or was made in their cabinet shops. Nor is any marked increase of luxury in their interior furnishings apparent throughout most of the colonial period. The Haynes family will suffice for illustration. Governor John Haynes died in 1653. His home-lot was on the northwest corner of Arch and Front streets. At his death, he had a spacious "Mansion House," "with Outhouses, Barns, Stables, Orchards & Gardens." He had expended, of his own fortune, several thousand pounds in establishing the Colony, and his character and public services deserve a lasting memorial. Of the interior of his house, the hall is the best index. It was probably a room the size of a small double parlor. Often it must have been put to public uses. The furnishings were, "5 leather Chaires, 4 flagg bottome Chaires, one table, 3 Joined stooles, one tinn hanging Candelftick, 7 Cufhins, fire lock mufkett, 1 Carbine, 1 match-lock mufkett,

one rapier, 1 pare Cobirons, 1 Iron Back, 1 gilded looking glafe, 1 greate bible, 1 fmothing Iron." It has been thought that Governor John Winthrop lived in this house, after he was chosen to office in 1657. He was then invited to "come & liue in Hartford, wth his family, while hee gou^{r}nes," and the General Court then offered him the yearly use of the "housing & lands in Hartford belonging to Mr. John Haynes." At his death in 1676, he had considerable household property in Hartford, valued at £73 1 s. 4 d. Perhaps Rev. Joseph Haynes lived in the same house. When he died in 1679, the hall contained, "one Cupboard wth Cupboard cloths wth some earthen ware standing upon it, two tables & chairs, 3 chishens, 2 Andirons, 1 brafs candlestick." In due time this home was occupied by his son, Judge John Haynes, who died in 1713. At that time the hall's furnishings were, "a great Table, Carpet, Lefser Table, 9 Leath^{r} Chairs, Seven Lefser Chairs, a Looking glafs, hour glafs, pa. Iron doggs, fire slice, pa. Tongs, gridiron, Trevitt, Lamp, a Toafting Iron, Earthen Ware, drinking glafses and Small Vialls, Knives and forks, chaffing difh."

The arms of those times were usually kept in the hall. Every home was provided with some weapon of defense, and certain warlike individuals seemed to have a small armory. The inventory of Richard Lord, 1711, exhibits an exceptional collection of arms — "A short new fuzee, Do. longer, a Carbine, a small peice, long peice, round barrel, 1 Do, Old Carbine, a long gun, Cafe piftolls and holsters, hoosing and caps, A plate belt Sword, Another Sword, two old blads, An old Sholder belt, Cane wth plate head, do ivory, An hunting whip, a musquet." Sometimes a saddle and riding bridle were apparently kept in the hall, but they are found in the parlor, a chamber, or a closet. In the hall we would naturally look for the family clock; but time-pieces of any kind were scarce. George Wyllys, at his death in 1644, bequeathed a watch to his son Samuel. The inventory of Captain Richard Lord, 1662, mentions a watch, which, perhaps, descended to his grandson, Richard Lord, and is valued at his death, in 1711, at £12. In the estate of Elisha Lord, 1725, a watch is noted. Rev. Samuel Stone, 1663, Lt. Col. John Talcott, 1688, Judge Nathaniel Stanley, 1712,

and others, had hour-glasses. The inventory of Rev. Thomas Hooker, 1649, is the earliest to mention a clock. It was kept in his new parlor, the entire furnishings of which were valued at only £5. It was probably a small brass clock, hung high on the wall, with its weight exposed. A clock in the estate of Governor Thomas Welles, 1659, was valued at £1. Major James Richards, 1680, had one valued at £3. About the middle of the eighteenth century, a "clock reall" is common. Among the possessions of Rev. Nathaniel Hooker of Hartford, who died in 1770, there was "A Clock and Cafe" valued at £5. This was doubtless a tall, cased eight-day clock, of the pattern introduced into New England late in the seventeenth century, but rarely found in towns like Hartford until after the Revolutionary War.[1] Isaac Sheldon, who died in 1786, had a "Mohogony Clock" valued at £12. It is interesting to see in some early inventories pieces of furniture that were highly valued, such as livery-cupboards, inlaid tables and the like. To many an inhabitant, these were doubtless the cherished reminders of an English home. There were many, however, especially young men without families, the circumstances of whose departure from England did not permit them to bring such articles. Occasionally, some one like Major Richards had a piece of armor. Many, doubtless, had swords, which they had carried in England. Nathaniel Hooker's inventory in 1763, mentions a "Coat of Arms of the family." In 1796, John Haynes Lord's estate included a "cote of arms." Captain Joseph Talcott, in 1799, had a "Family Seal." Others had the like, and they were used in sealing documents.

The ancient houses of Hartford that have survived to recent times have become generally known. Those that still remain are interesting to some, as representatives of the architecture of a by-gone age. To others, their great charm is in the fact that they are memorials of colonial life. They have been stripped of those verdant beauties with which they were once surrounded, and mutilated by those who have adapted them to modern service; but they were once the homes of honored generations that have passed

[1] *The Hartford Courant*, June 26, 1906.

The Amos Bull and Joseph Whiting Houses

away and left their habitations desolate. If we can, in some measure, restore their environment by the use of the records, the reader's imagination may be assisted in picturing some of Hartford's colonial homes.

The youngest son of Major William Whiting, the merchant, was Joseph, born in 1645. He married, first, Mary, the daughter of Hon. John and Amy (Wyllys) Pynchon of Springfield, and, second, Anna, the daughter of Colonel John Allyn. He settled in Westfield, but returned in 1676 to Hartford. His father's old home was on Governor Street. Rev. John Whiting, his brother, was then pastor of the Second Church, and lived on the former home-lot of Nathaniel Ward, on Sheldon Street. Joseph Whiting purchased, in 1682, from Zachary Sandford, one-half acre on the corner of Main and Charter Oak streets, with a tenement standing thereon. It was, perhaps, the same house, which the grantor had bought from Francis Barnard in 1667, and can not be older, for the house of the original owner, Andrew Bacon, stood on the north end of his lot. In this house, or in another which he built, Joseph Whiting lived during his remaining years, being the Treasurer of Connecticut from 1678 to his death, in 1717. The house has been fully described by Mr. Isham in *Early Connecticut Houses*. It stood a short distance from the corner, with its gable toward the street and was demolished in May 1914. Most of the early houses of Hartford faced either east or south. There were trees about it and an orchard on the east, beyond which was the South-side pound. In Joseph Whiting's day, there were not more than three or four houses and the Second Church meeting-house between this corner and the Little River. The surroundings were those of a country village. Joseph Whiting left an estate of £2546 5 s. 5 d. "The Mantion Houfe and homestead" were valued at £155. After his widow's death in 1735, the estate was divided, the surviving children being Susanna, the wife of Thomas Warren, Anna, the wife of Nathaniel Stanley, Margaret, the wife of Rev. Jonathan Marsh of Windsor, and Colonel John Whiting, who married Jerusha, daughter of Richard Lord. The son succeeded his father as Treasurer of Connecticut, and died in 1766. In 1749, Nathaniel Stanley and his wife sold this

property to Captain Aaron Bull, and it was for many years the latter's homestead. It comprised when purchased three-fourths of an acre, with a dwelling-house and other buildings. A passway on the north separated it from the Freeman Gross homestead. Captain Bull looked out of his west windows, upon the building of the second meeting-house of the South Church. The Whiting, Stanley, Bull and Warren families were its staunch supporters. In this house the Ecclesiastical Council convened in 1784, and marched in procession across the street, to install Rev. Benjamin Boardman. In 1788 the owner sold the north part of his homestead to Amos Bull, who erected upon it a brick house, now known as the Spencer house. Captain Bull died in 1793, aged 82 years. The rooms mentioned identify the old house. The property was divided among the widow and her daughters. A grandson, Aaron Bull, inherited eventually the house and a portion of the lot, which he sold in 1809 to George Burr. After a few years, other buildings began to crowd in around it, and this homestead disappeared into modern life. To how much of Hartford's South-side history this ancient house has been a witness, will never be known. Its history covers most of the life of the church to which it has always been a neighbor. Many public men must have crossed its threshold. Prominent Hartford families have been its tenants. All are gone. Still, if the builder of it could return, he would recognize in this structure the work of his hand. So, many a man has builded better than he knew.

On the east side of Governor Street, near the corner of Sheldon, there stood until recently an ancient mansion-house, with which none in Hartford could compare as a memorial of early days. It was known in the last century as the Sheldon Woodbridge house. Mr. Isham has discussed its architectural features. This interest may be enhanced by the family history that gathers about this house or its predecessor. The land upon which it stood was originally a part of John White's home-lot. Governor Hopkins acquired three lots east of it before 1639, and also exchanged a strip of his own land for the north portion of White's lot. The original Hopkins house stood some dis-

tance east of this, probably on his own allotment. In 1639, he had outhouses, yards and gardens adjoining it. The Hopkins trustees sold this property in 1665, to Mr. James Richards, a son of Thomas of Plymouth and a brother of Major John Richards of Boston. The new owner had lived in Hartford several years, and had married Sarah, the daughter of William Gibbons. It is said that "in calling he was a merchant, and traded extensively in real estate." This family lived in the Hopkins mansion. Four daughters and a son Thomas, were the children of this circle.[1] In the autumn of 1675, Major James Richards's warehouse and barn were destroyed by fire. The Hopkins mansion must then have been nearly forty years old. The owner, apparently, considered the loss of his buildings an opportune time for a change of location. He had, in 1665, secured land from the town, "at y^e^ North end of his home lott w^ch^ was M^r^ Edward Hopkins," and had probably then erected the buildings that had been burned. In 1676, he petitioned for "a smale parcell of land on the North of his Home lott between it & the riuer to set a Barn."[2] His request was granted. The land was laid out February 5, 1676–7.[3] It was west of his former grant and along the river. This would have been northerly from the corner tract secured from Elder John White, who then lived south of it. Major Richards was probably then establishing his new home in this location. In 1679, he recorded this property as a tract of nearly twenty acres. It was that "on which his now dwelling houfe standes" — an expression that meant, in some instances at least, the owner's present dwelling house. This house faced the main highway on the west; but it would doubtless have had, like others, a side exposure toward the south, with the garden usually found near such homesteads. On June 11, 1680, Major Richards died — a man highly respected, who had served as a magistrate sixteen years. His gravestone in the ancient burying-ground

[1] Sarah Richards married Captain Benjamin Davis; Mary married Mr. Benjamin Alford; Jerusha married Rev. and Governor Gurdon Saltonstall; and Elizabeth married Rev. John Davie of Groton, later Sir John Davie of Creedy, Co. Devon, England.

[2] *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 149, 176.

[3] *Original Distribution*, p. 543.

bears the coat of arms of his family. The inventory of his estate amounted to £7931 1s., which he had acquired by inheritance, marriage and trade. It was the largest estate that had been probated in Hartford. About one-third of it consisted of lands in England. He had also some estate and housing in Boston. His real estate in Hartford was valued at £1753. In his house there were the following rooms: parlor, hall, space-room, kitchen, green chamber, parlor chamber, porch chamber, space chamber, kitchen chamber, little parlor chamber and garret chamber.[1] Widow Sarah Richards married, as his second or third wife, Humphrey Davie Esq. of Boston, the father of her son-in-law. He died at Hartford in 1688, and his inventory mentions the same rooms above noted. Mrs. Sarah Davie married, in 1706, Colonel Jonathan Tyng of Dunstable. Meanwhile the son, Thomas Richards, born in 1670, had become of age and married Joanna Dodd. In 1694, by the death of his uncle Major John Richards, he inherited property in Boston. Thus, in 1704, he leased to Thomas Seymour, for one-half the revenue, "all that Cappitall Mefuage or Tenement wherein the said Thomas Richards now dwelleth," the same to run seven years from April 1, 1705.[2] If the above expression may be taken as equivalent to "capital manse," the dignity of a manor-house was claimed for this residence.[3] Mr. Thomas Richards died at Boston in 1714. His widow Joanna Richards, and her daughters Joanna and Mary, were

[1] The obsolete terms "space-room" and "space-chamber" determine the plan of this house. The passage or "middle pace" dividing a house was anciently called a "space way." The space-room was at the end of this passage and the space-chamber was above that room. The front room on the second floor was the porch-chamber. We have met with no mention of space rooms in other contemporary Hartford inventories. The contents of this space-room in 1680 were as follows: "Armour & small artillery, musket, pike, pistolls, small guns with carriages, ammunition, 4 leather & 1 flag chair, small table, two chests, 2 saddles, sword, lanthorn, curry comb & spinning wheel."

[2] "Seymour Papers: Madam Richards's Land," in *Boardman Collection*, State Library, Nos. 138–146.

[3] The term messuage (messuagium) was applied to a dwelling-house, when taken in connection with and including all adjacent outbuildings and the lands belonging thereto. The owners of several often applied the term "capital messuage" to the one he occupied. A manor-house was a capital messuage, and the terms were sometimes used interchangeably. Thomas Richards had other properties that were rented.

the heirs.[1] Madam Richards was not an agreeable person with whom to transact business. Nor did she appreciate the faithful stewardship of her tenant, Captain Thomas Seymour. He finally induced Jonathan and Isaac Sheldon of Northampton to join with him in purchasing the estate. It was conveyed to them in 1715. Ten years later, the daughters, Joanna Brooker and Mary Evitt of Boston, released to Jonathan and Isaac Sheldon their interest in "One Certain Mansion or Dwelling house," with the home-lot of one acre and several other tracts of land. The consideration was £1108. A statement of Captain Seymour concerning this transaction implies that the house and buildings were then out of repair. Mr. Isaac Sheldon, having acquired the whole of this homestead, made it his residence until his death in 1749. He was a man of some means and standing. He was chosen a deacon in the Second Church, where his children were baptized.[2] The inventory of his estate is missing. His will mentions his house, but does not assist in identifying it. The homestead descended to his son Isaac, who died in 1786. In his inventory rooms are named that correspond reasonably well with those in Major Richards's house. Again the "space-chamber" is mentioned.[3] His widow had a right in the "space ways and stairs," as also in the garden south of the house. Thus this homestead passed to the heirs of his daughter Elizabeth,

[1] Mrs. Joanna Richards subsequently married Dr. John Cutler of Boston. The younger daughter, Mary, married Benjamin Evitt, and died intestate in 1743. Joanna Richards, in 1720, married William Brooker, he having executed an ante-nupital agreement to give her the control of her property. In 1759, Joanna Brooker, being then a widow, made a will in which, after sundry legacies to her kindred, she remembered the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," King's Chapel in Boston, and gave the residuum of her estate to the Selectmen of Boston for the relief of poor widows and sick people. She died the same year. Her estate amounted to something over £1600. The real estate in Connecticut was bequeathed to the children or legal representatives of Edward Dodd, Gent. of Hartford.

[2] Dea. Isaac Sheldon, b. Aug. 26, 1686, was the son of Isaac and Sarah (Warren) Sheldon. He is said to have married, 1st Elizabeth Pratt of Hartford, who d. in Sept. 1745, ae., 53. He married, 2nd, June 26, 1746, Theoda, eldest daughter of Jonathan and Martha (Williams) Hunt. Dea. Sheldon's children, all by his first wife, were, Elizabeth (Marsh), Sarah (Woodbridge), Isaac, Daniel, Joseph, Rebecca and Hannah.

[3] The contents were: "1 Bedsted & Bed, 1 p^{r} Pistols & Holster, 1 p^{r} Saddle Bags, 1 do Portmanteau, 1 Gun, 1 New Saddle, 1 Womans Saddle."

the wife of Joseph Woodbridge, and mother of Mr. Sheldon Woodbridge. It seems probable, therefore, when judgment is based upon the historical evidence, that the ancient house made famous by its peculiar construction, was that erected by Major James Richards, with subsequent alterations and improvements. The price paid for the property by Mr. Sheldon indicates that there was exceptional value in the buildings upon it. Major Richards was very wealthy, with a large acquaintance throughout New England, an estate in County Norfolk, England, and decided aristocratic inclinations. He made several voyages to the mother country and was often in Boston with his family. It would have been natural for him to erect a manor-house. Upon a close acquaintance with Deacon Sheldon, he does not seem to have been a man for such a venture. He valued lands above houses, and acquired, by frugality and enterprise, large tracts of the former. Such a man would hardly have torn down one of the most pretentious mansions of its day, to erect in the same place a counterpart of it. He doubtless found it in need of repairs, which he and his son made without unnecessary expense. In the recent destruction of this ancient house, the original frame was seen to be very old, as were the chimneys at either end. The north wall stood as originally built. Its bricks were of early date and laid in clay. On the other hand, the wall at the south end of the house had been rebuilt, the bricks being laid in lime mortar. At this time, tie-anchors were used. It is conjectured that this rebuilding was done about 1721, which is the date upon an old hand-made brick in the author's possession. Both walls had been carefully pointed with mortar, apparently several times. The stones of the cellar wall were mostly of red sandstone, from the quarry at the lower falls of the Little River, only a few rods distant. The panelling was of exceptional quality, but comparatively modern, as were the dormer windows of the third story. The door in the south wall, afterwards closed up, furnished an exit from the hall into the garden on the south side of the house, and the southern windows admitted the winter sunshine. About the house there were once buttonwood trees. On the east, at no great distance, was an orchard, planted originally

The Richards–Sheldon–Woodbridge House

by Governor Edward Hopkins. There was a well, also, near the house. As the town votes indicate, the barns and outbuildings were on the north, where the cattle had access to the clear water of the riveret. Restore all these features of the surroundings in the imagination; adorn the picture with shrubs, vines and flowers, from an old English garden — then you have, as nearly as may be, a historical representation of an ancient mansion of Hartford, which the records encourage us to term a "manor-house" — a homestead with an ancestral interest for many of the Seymour and Sheldon families.

There are still standing within the limits of the colonial town, a number of houses that were erected about the middle of the eighteenth century. Some that were older, have been destroyed during the last thirty years, though pictures of them have been preserved in the "Taylor Collection." [1] The fact is, however, that any catalogue is quite incomplete, because we look merely for mansions. It should include those smaller buildings, or parts of them, that are hidden away behind modern structures. Some of these are of brick, and were once dwelling-houses. The old-time custom of moving houses to adapt them for further use, has also taken some out of the environment that gave them a charm. If we deal merely with the house, our field of interest is limited. In the study of ancient homesteads, the records contribute materially, both to the scope of investigation and the reliability of the results.

Such a story may be told of the Captain Jonah Gross homestead, included within the early boundaries of the meeting-house yard, and now in the midst of Hartford's business life. The southern bound of that yard was Clement Chaplin's house-lot, as seen in the Plan of Hartford in 1640. At an early date, the town granted, on the south side of this yard, two parcels of land. That on the west contained two roods, and was owned at our earliest record by William

[1] This collection of photographs of old Hartford houses was made, in anticipation of their destruction, by the late Mr. Samuel Taylor, a resident of this city nearly all his life, and it is now in the possession of the Misses Taylor, 30 Charter Oak Place, Hartford.

Hubbard.[1] East of this, was a rood owned by Thomas Hubbard, who sold to John Morris. The latter conveyed it, in 1665, to John Mitchell, with "a mefuag or Teniment Standing thereon." At that time, the grantee appears to have had land on the east, which was increased in 1667, by the town's grant of the "peice of Ground that hee hath now fenced in for his hay yard." In 1672, he received a further grant of land against his house, and he moved out to a line with his neighbor.[2] John Mitchell was a barber by trade. He had the first shop that we know of in that locality.[3] He also had the honor of impounding any hogs that were found in the highway or commons, "not sufficiently ringed." In 1683, he died. His inventory mentions "the New houfe" in which he had lived. He left some estate to his widow, a son and five daughters. The son, John Mitchell, occupied the homestead for a dozen years. He was the town's brander of horses and kept the record book. In 1694, he made a voyage to Barbadoes, and died there the following year. His widow Elizabeth Mitchell continued in the homestead. Her daughter Sarah, a spinster, sold this property in 1705, to John Butler, a shoemaker, being about two roods with a dwelling-house. On August 10, 1708, John Butler conveyed the same to Jonah Gross. He was the son of Simon Gross of Hingham, Mass., and was born there April 2, 1683.[4] His father was a "boatman," and the son also followed the sea. This purchase of the Mitchell homestead is our earliest acquaintance with Captain Gross in Hartford. He was then master of the sloop "Diamond alias Tryal." In 1709, a libel was filed against him and the sloop was seized.[5] Three years later, he was transporting provisions to Boston in his vessel. For the Colony, he carried "3 bbls porke, 86 bushels Indian Corn, 26 bushels wheat & 3 bushels of Rye." In

[1] *Original Distribution*, pp. 180, 511; *Hartford Land Records*, 2: 221; 3: 187; 4: 216.

[2] *Original Distribution*, pp. 180, 511, 374; *Hartford Town Votes*, I: 153, 167.

[3] His inventory has the folowling items: "In the fhop one Looking glass — 0–6–0"; "By Rafors, Combs, fiffers, a Bafon, a hair brufh & Bottle — 0–16–0." The "Houfe, barn & home lot" were valued at £35. He also kept three cows, a horse and two swine.

[4] *MS. Gross Genealogy*, by Charles E. Gross, Esq.

[5] *Conn. Col. Rec.*, V: 149.

the autumn of 1712, he kept his sloop in waiting for a week, to fulfill an engagement with Cornelius Peck for a voyage to South Carolina, out of which a lawsuit arose. It was probably to raise funds for some voyage that he transferred his homestead, in 1715, to Elizabeth Wadsworth, a "mantee maker," who returned it two years later. He married March 13, 1717–18, Susannah, daughter of Samuel Howard, by whom he had children Samuel, Susannah, Lucretia, Rebecca and Lorenzo. These were all baptized in the First Church, where he had owned the covenant in 1720. The town gave him liberty, in 1722, to build a vessel where the selectmen should appoint. Thereafter for twenty years, he was one of Hartford's most prominent sea captains, engaged largely in the coast trade. He had an adventurous voyage in 1741. Having mortgaged his homestead to John Austin, probably to secure the means, he sailed for some unknown port. The sequel is best told by his pastor, Rev. Daniel Wadsworth. July 14, 1742 — "This day Jonah Gross came Home, he was taken by y^{e} Spaniards May 30, 1741 and carried to Porto Valla from there to Leguvia, from thence over Land to Crokus and kept in prison there till sometime in april Last and then released. May god give him a thankful heart for his deliverance." July 15. "This day . . . rejoyced at the return of one of my people from Captivity."[1] The debt of £250 to John Austin was paid, and the homestead released. In 1745, his sloop the *Rebeckah* was doubtless one of the transports engaged by the Colony for the Cape Breton expedition. It was his last voyage. Ere he sailed, he had, in his will, committed his "body to the grave either in the land or sea," but his resting place is unknown. Probably he died at Cape Breton of the sickness that carried off more than one-quarter of the troops.

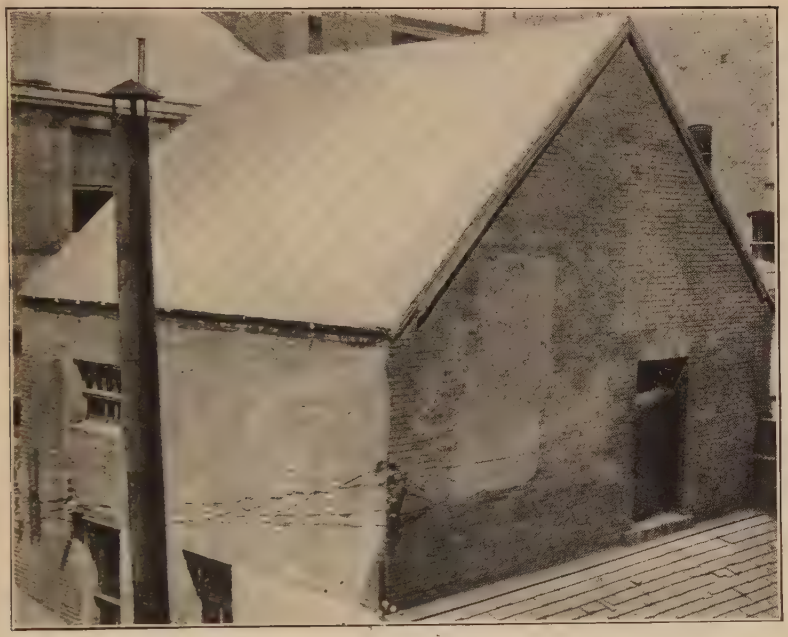
We attribute to Captain Gross the erection of a brick house near the west end of his lot, soon after the above marriage. This house, afterwards known as his "mansion," is still standing, as the records prove, on the corner northeast of the entrance to Bond's restaurant, in the rear of Central Row. It is about nineteen feet square and two and one-half stories high. The roof has the steep pitch then common.

[1] *Wadsworth's Diary*, p. 87.

Windows that were originally small have been enlarged. The door that entered it through a leanto kitchen on the west has long since been closed. A well was near at hand, with outbuildings and a mulberry tree. On the east the house looked out upon the garden. After the death of Captain Jonah Gross, this homestead experienced various fortunes. The widow conveyed it to her son Samuel Gross, a mariner, reserving the use of certain rooms.[1] He sold forty-five feet on the east end in 1750, to his brother-in-law, Dr. Roderick Morrison.[2] The land was increased by a grant from the town.[3] In 1754, Captain Samuel Gross died, intestate and without issue. In his inventory, this house and land were valued at £2400, in the currency of that date.[4] One-third was set off to the widow, Amy Gross. She sold it to her mother-in-law, Susannah Gross, who died in this homestead in 1762. The residue was divided among the decedent's three sisters, Susannah Morrison, Lucretia the wife of Daniel Sheldon, Rebecca the wife of Abijah Clark, and the younger brother, Lorenzo Gross. In 1765 the latter died in the homestead, unmarried. It was this divided interest in the property, which continued until 1824, that prevented the destruction of the old house.[5] The brick addition on the north, and probably that next on the east, were improvements made by William Gove who acquired the Sheldon interest in 1781, and conducted a store there.

The early house of Susannah Gross Morrison is also standing, though in another location. Its story is a fitting conclusion to a chapter that might be indefinitely extended. Roderick Morrison was a brother of Normand Morrison of Hartford. Both were well-known physicians in their day. On January 16, 1744–5, Dr. Roderick Morrison married Susannah, the daughter of Captain Jonah Gross. They had five children of whom Roderick, alone, survived the perils of infancy. Having acquired, in 1750, the east end of the Gross

[1] *Hartford Land Records*, 7: 457.
[2] *Ibid.*, 8: 302. [3] *Ibid.*, 8: 7.
[4] This inventory has the interesting and surprising item: "one fountain Pen 2s."
[5] *Hartford Land Records*, 10: 318; 12: 426, 510; 13: 19, 32, 68, 417, 467; 15: 344; 16: 319; 17: 458; 20: 102; 42: 448, 449, 451; 43: 145.



House of Captain Jonah Gross

House of Dr. Roderick Morrison, 1750

homestead, now the corner of Central Row and Prospect Street, Dr. Morrison tore down certain buildings thereon and erected a large gambrel-roof house. Here he resided, conducting his medical practice and the sale of drugs. His remaining years were few. On January 14, 1755, his interment occurred in the old burying-ground. His widow became, several years later, the third wife of Lieutenant Joseph Phelps of Hebron, who died June 16, 1764. She soon married Colonel Samuel Gilbert of the same town, a distinguished man in his day. After his death, having contracted the matrimonial habit, she married in 1775, as his second wife, Nathaniel Chauncey of Middletown, and herself departed in peace in 1795.

At the death of Dr. Morrison, his home was bequeathed to his widow and son Roderick. They sold it, July 16, 1765, to Colonel Samuel Gilbert, her husband. Sylvester Gilbert conveyed it, in 1778, to Peter Verstille, who kept a store there. From his administrator it passed, in 1784, to Captain John Chenevard. His son John Chenevard Jr., lived there, and, in 1803, received it by deed of gift. From his estate, Henry Seymour secured it in 1821, and the next year sold it to Jonathan Ramsey.[1] In 1829, Henry L. Ellsworth was engaged in the improvement of Central Row property. Having acquired this house and lot from Mr. Ramsey, he petitioned the Common Council for permission to remove the old gambrel-roof house to a new location on Prospect Street, "next north of the house lot of Thomas S. Williams, Esq.," and make alterations in it.[2] His request was granted, and the Roderick Morrison house, now over one hundred and sixty years old, was placed in its present location, north of the Connecticut Humane Society building.

This ancient house, when it stood on the corner of Central Row, south of the Market Place, and was owned by Colonel Samuel Gilbert, was the home of Thomas Green, the founder of *The Connecticut Courant*, before his removal to New Haven. The following advertisement in that journal establishes this fact: "To be sold, or let, A good convenient Dwelling-Houfe

[1] *Ibid.*, 8: 302; 11: 467; 12: 414; 13: 372; 15: 438; 16: 131; 24: 326; 38: 157; 42: 214; 48: 166; 49; 361. See also *The Hartford Times*, Nov. 8, 1912.

[2] *Common Council Records*, Book C, p. 342.

and Garden in Hartford near the Court Houſe, well ſituated for any kind of Buſineſs, lately occupied by Mr. Thomas Green. For further Particulars, enquire of Samuel Gilbert of Hebron, or the Printer hereof. N. B. The one Half of ſaid Houſe will be let, to any Perſon who ſhall not incline to hire the whole." [1] Moreover, in 1830, George Goodwin, then seventy-four years of age, who had been connected with the *Courant* from his boyhood, was called upon to testify as to the property where Parsons Theatre now stands. He then stated that he had "lived when an apprentice in the House lately owned by Jon[a] Ramsey, South of the Old Market." [2] So it was in this house that George Goodwin lived with the family of his master while he was preparing for his life work. The alterations that have been made in the building can easily be traced. It has been divided into two tenements, the rear portion has been added, and the gambrel-roof has given place to a third story. Probably, it was here also, that Thomas, the son of Thomas and Desire (Sanford) Green, was born in 1765. He was one of the founders of *The Middlesex Gazette* of Middletown. His baptism, on August 17, 1766, had been recorded at Christ Church in that town. In 1799, he became the partner of his father in the publication of *The Connecticut Journal* of New Haven. He died in 1825, aged 60 years. This house has associations, therefore, with the early days of *The Connecticut Courant*, and that remarkable family of printers, of which its founder was a member.

[1] *The Connecticut Courant*, Feb. 8, 1768.

[2] "Report on the Petition of Samuel Olcott" in *State Street Papers*, City Clerk's Office.

CHAPTER XX

INCORPORATION OF THE CITY

In the year 1784, five cities were incorporated in Connecticut. The General Assembly, at its January session, granted such privileges to New Haven and New London, and, at its May session, to Hartford, Middletown, and Norwich. These are now, by many years, the oldest municipalities in New England, for Newport, incorporated that year, soon abandoned the experiment.[1] New York and Albany were made cities in the seventeenth century. Philadelphia followed in 1701. Richmond, Va., was incorporated in 1782, and Charleston, S. C., the next year. These five constituted the sisterhood of American municipalities, when the number was augmented by five others, brought forth, as it were, at one birth in Connecticut. None of this latter group had over four thousand inhabitants within the territory incorporated. All of them had conducted in their ships before the Revolutionary War, a limited trade, which had made them acquainted with commercial life. We have no evidence that in any of them, except New Haven, this or any other reason had suggested the expediency of incorporation. The inference is that a movement originated in that town which spread to others. This could not have been due to any popular whim; nor did it arise from any jealousy among them. It had sufficient grounds to furnish the inhabitants in all of them with substantial reasons for seeking some departure from their ancient town government, in order to meet the conditions with which they were all confronted at the close of the Revolutionary War. As early as 1771, action had been taken in New Haven toward incorporation. A committee had then been appointed to consider the matter; but it never reported. This purpose was revived

[1] *R. I. Col. Rec.*, X: 30, 217, 233, 234.

in 1783. No doubt some local antagonism between "The Town-Born" and "The Interlopers" of New Haven was involved in the movement, but this has not been discovered in Hartford.[1] The real issue arose out of the liberal, ambitious and progressive spirit of those who had long been engaged in commercial affairs. In the discouraging conditions that followed the Revolutionary War, this spirit was manifest in all of the five towns concerned. It demanded a corporate agency more enterprising than the town system could afford. To examine this development in the incorporation of the City of Hartford, is the writer's purpose. Thus the ancient town made its escape from the ultraconservative, narrow and often sordid opinions that had grown up in colonial times.

During the Revolutionary War, no hostile party of the enemy set foot within the bounds of Hartford. It furnished a large quota of soldiers for the army; and the sacrifices of its inhabitants were equal to those of any community in Connecticut. Members of its prominent families were engaged in the struggle, either in a civil or a military capacity. Prisoners of war were incarcerated in its jail. They were often seen in its streets, on parole, which an inland location was thought to render comparatively safe. There is evidence also that Hartford was a favorite resort for soldiers, some of whom were sick, or convalescing from wounds. It is well known that at certain times of inactivity, soldiers were allowed liberal absences, when better food and care were needed than the army could provide. At one time, some of Connecticut's militia were sent home to procure their daily bread. Provisions were often gathered at Hartford. Wagonloads of supplies were continually being dispatched thence to the seat of war, or were tarrying for the night at its inns. Thus, throughout the war, the town was in the ferment of patriotism from other causes than the periodical gathering of the General Assembly, meetings of the Council of Safety and the important conferences, which were held by General Washington or his messengers at the home of Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth. The effect of these conditions upon

[1] *The Republic of New Haven*, by Dr. Charles H. Levermore, in Johns Hopkins Historical Studies, 1886.

the inhabitants was marked. It helped to strengthen the influence of certain patriotic leaders in the town's councils. There was developed among those who were most active, a hopeful energy in public affairs. The value of united effort, which had not been characteristic of colonial times, had an opportunity to prove itself in the midst of difficulties. Men who had been engaged in business recognized their common cause in the solution of problems, which peace would inevitably propound. Indeed, the Revolutionary War, like many another in history, created a new type of man, more progressive than those of colonial times. To him it was given to meet the issues of American independence.

The close of the war found Connecticut greatly impoverished. The financial burdens of the inhabitants had been heavy. The demands that had been made upon this state for provisions, are said by Governor Trumbull to have been "vastly beyond" her just proportion. Other states, not so favorably located for uninterrupted continuance of agriculture, could not furnish the supplies that were repeatedly asked of "Brother Jonathan." Payment was usually made in a depreciating currency, which involved financial loss and caused discontent. Connecticut had also borne the cost of defending her own sea-coasts, an expense which the national government was unwilling to assume. In 1783, when the commutation or pension issue, and the proposal to grant Congress the right to lay an impost tax were under discussion, the people throughout the state were anxious and depressed, as they confronted the payment of an enormous debt, which, it was thought, would fall largely upon their agricultural interests. It was this situation that led to the creation of the progressive party of that day, and summoned the patriotic to action. They all saw that the state's brighter prospects lay in the revival of her commercial life. Money was very scarce, but, as Connecticut yankees, they knew that an export trade would bring it back. Thus merchants, whose business had been ruined by the war, reopened their warehouses, and sea captains began to make ready their vessels, which had bleached in the sun for years. This movement originated in New Haven, and Roger Sherman, who had been chairman of the committee in 1771

and was again appointed in 1783, bore a conspicuous part in it. The action of the various towns concerned, will show how rapidly it spread.

There is no doubt that current agitation of the impost question exerted an influence in this incorporation movement. Some thought that the right to place a duty upon articles imported from foreign lands, should be reserved by the states. Governor Trumbull, the Senate, and progressives generally, including several afterwards elected mayors of the new cities, considered a national impost essential to the Government's credit and standing. On this matter, the inhabitants of Hartford were divided. At a town meeting September 16, 1783, the freemen voted to oppose encroachments of the American Congress upon the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the states. On the same occasion, they urged the General Assembly to regulate and encourage commerce within the state. This power of impost was not given by the Connecticut House of Representatives until May 20, 1784, nine days before the granting of Hartford's charter. The town's early opposition illustrates the unprogressive character of the action that might be expected at a freemen's meeting, and it must have made many of the new party aware of the fact. After that date, the impost question was more widely discussed. In the issue of *The Connecticut Gazette*, December 12, 1783, a contributor, under the pseudonym *Philo-Patriae*, stated the matter thus: "This State ought at leaft to fecure the avails of her own hands: but if we are ftill to go on blind-fold, hiring Boſton and New York to import for us, at the ſum of twelve and an half, and many times twenty-five per cent, they will have prudence enough to purchaſe our cargoes at their own price, and make us pay for the purchaſe in the goods they import with them." It then began to appear more clearly to many, that Connecticut must take whatever action would further the importation of foreign goods by her own merchants, in ships sailing from Connecticut ports. To this, their incorporation was considered essential. Governor Trumbull, who had already signified his intention of retiring to private life, took a prominent part in this discussion. He is credited with being the author of a series of six articles,

which had been recently written, and had appeared in the above-named newspaper, beginning with the issue of March 26, 1784. Their title was the "Policy of Connecticut." A prefatory note was signed by "S.M.," who may have been Samuel Marsh, a warm advocate of incorporation at Hartford. In these articles the author claimed that Connecticut consumed, annually, three hundred and fifty thousand dollars worth of imported goods, one-eighth of which only she imported herself, the residue being purchased from states that had, or would soon have — unless the power was granted to Congress — a local impost for the benefit of their own treasuries.[1] He advocated, in the fifth article, the incorporation of towns, with independent jurisdiction in certain local matters. "The original plan of thefe incorporations in Connecticut," he says, "was suggefted with a view of promoting the commercial intereft of the diftrict propofed to be incorporated. In this refpect the plan is good and no doubt deferves the patronage of the Legiflature. But I conceive that fuch incorporations will have a provincial influence and that even afide of local advantages, the State at large will derive important benefits from the inftitution." He then reviewed the value of incorporation in European cities, and declared that opposition to such action in Connecticut proceeded "from unreafonable jealoufy or from ignorance." It was a movement in which mechanics and farmers, as well as merchants, had an interest. "To the low ftate of commerce in Connecticut," he wrote, "muft be afcribed the prefent fcarcity of cafh which is always plenty where bufiness is lively." His concluding observation had such a direct application to the conflict of opinions in Hartford, that we may infer his acquaintance with the situation and intended reference: "The farming intereft muft bear all the public burdens till we improve our natural advantages and give extenfion to commerce." [2]

The plan for municipal incorporation in Connecticut was itself an admission of the impossibility of advancing com-

[1] *The Connecticut Gazette*, New London, April 9, 1784. Cf. Stuart's *Life of Jonathan Trumbull*, pp. 638, 639.

[2] *The Connecticut Gazette*, May 28, 1784. The same article had been published in *The Connecticut Courant*, May 18th.

mercial interests under town government, as developed in colonial times. Its advocates stated that "a due regulation of the Internal police" was needed. "It is a matter of no small importance," they said, "that wharves, Streets & Highways be commodious for Business, & kept continually in good repair." That none of these towns would undertake such improvements, was too obvious to be disputed by many. All of them were agricultural communities, with a large outlying population of farmers, and only a small area within the town-plot. The tract along the water-front, especially devoted to commercial pursuits, was still more limited. Farmers living at a distance could not discover any advantages accruing to them by the building of wharves in Hartford; nor were they interested in the regulation of the town's streets. Governor Trumbull declared that "in the incorporated towns in Connecticut the value of lands will increafe in two years, fufficient to defray the city-charges of twenty years." Such was probably the sequel, but, in 1784, the farmers of Hartford could not believe it. The contest, therefore, in all the five towns, was between the progressive inhabitants, seeking the revival of business life and the improvement of the town-plot, and the agricultural classes, which throughout colonial times had controlled the freemen's vote and persistently thwarted progress. The former thought it essential to create a corporate agency having the power to advance local interests. It need hardly be added that the same causes have operated since for the multiplication of Connecticut cities, and the assumption by the State of responsibilities that the towns have neglected. Under the conditions of 1784, the wonder is that any vote for incorporation was secured in Hartford. The difficulties had been lessened, however, by the incorporation of all the territory east of the Connecticut River, as East Hartford, which town held its first meeting on December 9, 1783. Thus the number of farmers in Hartford had been greatly reduced.

The memorial of New Haven to the General Assembly was dated September 22, 1783. New London and Norwich took similar action before anything was done in Hartford, although the matter had been discussed. At a town meeting,

held in the Court House, January 6, 1784, a committee of fourteen was appointed "to conſider and fix the Limitts of that Part, or the Whole of this Town, which is propoſed to be incorporated into a City." This meeting adjourned to January 9th, when Colonel Thomas Seymour and Mr. Chauncey Goodrich were instructed to present a memorial to the General Assembly, then in session at New Haven, asking for "the Incorporation of part of the Town of Hartford into a City with City privileges." That document is dated January 8th, and was probably the result of the deliberations of the first committee. It employed much of the language of New Haven's memorial. The limits therein defined extended along the river, from Wethersfield to Windsor, and some distance westward. It also asked for "Jurisdiction in all commercial matters on said Connecticut River opposite to said Town of Hartford." This memorial was referred to the next General Assembly, meeting May 13th at Hartford. Meanwhile, both parties were active in their cause. The opposition prepared a remonstrance, dated April 29th and signed by seventy-one inhabitants. This was perhaps written by Captain George Smith, who was afterwards charged by twelve of its signers with using "various Arts & Misrepresentations of the design and tendency of said act of Incorporation" to secure signatures. It was accompanied by lists of certain inhabitants of both parties, and some who were neutral, with their taxable estate in 1783, designed to minimize the importance and standing of the progressives.[1] The remonstrance claimed that their ancient town government was vested with ample powers to make and enforce "Laws and Regulations for their Internal Police." This may have been true, but there were also ample votes to prevent the use of those powers for improvements within the town-plot. It claimed, too, that a corporation with city privileges would conflict with the town and involve much expense, trouble and confusion; that they were groaning under "large and heavy taxes occasioned by the war," and that many would be obliged to dispose of a part or all of "that Patrimony which hath descended to them from their Pious fore Fathers Who sought an Assyllyum in

[1] *State Archives: Towns and Lands*, X: 12 a., 13 a., 13 b.

this then howling wilderness." The progressives, however, prepared a new memorial, dated May 6th. It was probably written by Mr. Chauncey Goodrich, the second mayor of the city and United States senator from Connecticut, 1807–1813, his associate in the Senate being James Hillhouse, one of the originators of the incorporation movement in New Haven. This memorial was signed by two hundred and nine inhabitants. The limits of the proposed city were admitted to have been "too extensive," and were altered as in the charter. The plea for jurisdiction in commercial matters on the east side of the river, was not repeated, but it was granted. Specific reference was made to the privileges that had been extended to New Haven and New London, and, for similar reasons, this patronage was asked for Hartford. The hope was also expressed that such action would be "the means of uniting the Efforts and Wealth of the commercial Part of the State in such useful and liberal plans of Trade as may rescue it from its dependence on our sister States and be an increasing emolument to our own." This petition was granted and "An Act for Incorporating a Part of the Town of Hartford" was passed May 29, 1784.

The limits of the city thus established were substantially those embraced within the settled portion of the town in 1640. They were defined as follows: "Beginning at a place called the Dutch Ground, upon the high land on the bank of the Great River, on the southerly side of said river as it now runs in the lot belonging to Thomas Seymour, Esq. [North of Charter Oak Avenue] and from thence a strait line to the northwest corner of Joshua Hempstead's dwelling-house [The southwest corner of Wethersfield Avenue and Wyllys Street], thence a westerly line to the northwest corner of James Steele's dwelling-house [The corner of Washington and Jefferson streets], from thence a northwesterly course to the southwest corner of James Shepard's malt-house [Near the corner of Park and Lafayette streets], from thence northerly, a strait line to the Upper Mills, so called, including said mills [Imlay's Mills], thence northerly in a strait line to the northwest corner of Capt. John Olcott's dwelling-house, including said house [The corner of Windsor Avenue and Belden Street], and from thence

turning and running due east a strait course to the Great River." [1] The municipal government they had formed would now be considered somewhat crude. It was chiefly designed to carry out effectively the purposes for which it had been sought. With amendments and special acts, this charter served the city until 1821, long after most of their original purposes had been accomplished. The corporate name was, at first, "The Mayor, Aldermen, Common Council and Freemen of the city of Hartford." It was not until 1859 that this name was changed to "The City of Hartford." The charter provided that, at an annual meeting of the freemen in March, they were to elect the mayor — who held his office during the pleasure of the General Assembly — four aldermen, and not more than twenty councilmen. These were to meet together as the Court of Common Council to deliberate on city affairs. The freemen were also to choose a clerk, treasurer and two sheriffs. A legal meeting of the freemen was made necessary to levy taxes, and they were to approve all by-laws made by the Court of Common Council. In the first memorial, the petitioners had asked the General Assembly to "institute a Court to be holden within said jurisdiction, with full Powers and Authority to hear, try and determine all Personal actions (where the Title of Land is not concerned) grounded on any Contract made or injury happening within said Limits, and that said Court may have a concurrent Authority in said Causes with the other Courts of Common Law in the State." The charter established this City Court, in which the mayor and two aldermen presided as judges. It was a common feature of all these Connecticut cities.

Accordingly, the first freemen's meeting was held June 28, 1784. The moderator was George Wyllys, Esq., the senior justice of the peace. Hon. Thomas Seymour was elected

[1] *Connecticut Statutes, Revision of 1784,* pp. 283 ff.; *City Code, Hartford,* 1856, pp. 265 ff. The City's limits were extended north to Capen Street, and south to Wawarme Avenue in 1853 (*Private Laws of Conn.,* III: 392 ff.). Territory, mainly on the west, was added in 1859 (*Ibid.,* V: 316 ff.). Another tract on the south was annexed in 1871 (*Special Laws of Conn.,* VII: 136). In 1873, the remainder of the town was included, except a strip on the north, the addition of which, in 1881, made the town and city bounds coincident (*Ibid.,* VII: 620; IX: 245). The City as originally chartered, covered 1700 acres, or one-sixth of the present area.

Mayor, an office which he filled for twenty-eight years. The aldermen chosen were: Col. Samuel Wyllys, Jonathan Bull Esq., Jesse Root, Esq., and Capt. Samuel Marsh. Twenty councilmen were elected, as follows: Capt. John Chenevard, Mr. Barnabas Deane, Ralph Pomeroy, Esq., Mr. James Church, Chauncey Goodrich, Esq., Mr. Peter Colt, Capt. John Olcott, Capt. John Caldwell, Mr. Zebulon Seymour, Mr. Zachariah Pratt, Mr. Ashbel Steele, William Nichols, Esq., John Trumbull, Esq., Mr. Barzillai Hudson, Capt. William Bull, Mr. Caleb Bull, Mr. John Morgan, Capt. Israel Seymour, Mr. Daniel Olcott, and Mr. Daniel Hinsdale. William Adams, Esq. was chosen City Clerk, Hezekiah Merrill, Esq., treasurer, and Capt. Joseph Talcott and Mr. James Wells, sheriffs.

This roll represents the progressive inhabitants of Hartford, to whose efforts its incorporation was due. With the exception of two or three, who were neutral, presumably for good reasons, all of these were among the memorialists of May 6th. During the next five years, nine of them were displaced by others; but all of the new men, with two exceptions, were memorialists. Strange to relate, one of the exceptions was Captain George Smith, who was chosen a councilman in 1785. He was the only one of the opposition who was thus honored for many years. Whether he experienced a change of mind, or was surrounded with fagots for torture, is unknown. The other exception was Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth, who did more than any in Hartford to push forward the improvements of the infant city. He was absent on his mission to France and England during the controversy; but he was informed of the movement by his business representative, Peter Colt, and favored it. On April 25, 1784, Mr. Colt wrote him as follows: "The people in this State seem desirous of having our Goods imported directly from Europe — with this view they have granted City Privileges to N. Haven & New London, hoping that Measure would serve to collect the trading Interest to a point — but our Merchants seem too shy & reserved to consult their true Interest — Great dependance is had upon your returng to this Country & setting down in this your native spot. They know your knowledge & activity in

The State House of 1792

Business is great & believe your Capital is equal to the occasion." The citizens of Hartford were not disappointed in Colonel Wadsworth. This letter passed on the ocean another from him, in which he intimates his purpose of using some of his means in "building up my [his] Native Town." Immediately upon his return, he began this labor. He was elected first alderman in 1785, serving six years, and a second term from 1795 to 1798. Then for four years he was first councilman. Besides this, he represented Hartford for eleven years in the councils of the State. The value of these services to the new city can only be measured by an examination of municipal improvements to his death, in 1804. He was worthy of the tribute paid to him by Brissot de Warville upon his visit to Hartford: "It is the reſidence of one of the moſt reſpectable men in the United States, Col. Wadſworth. He enjoys a conſiderable fortune, which he owes entirely to his own labour and induſtry. Perfectly verſed in agriculture and commerce; univerſally known for the ſervice he rendered to the American and French armies during the war; generally eſteemed and beloved for his great virtues; he crowns all his qualities by an amiable and ſingular modeſty. His addreſs is frank, his countenance open, and his diſcourſe ſimple. Thus you cannot fail to love him as ſoon as you ſee him; eſpecially as ſoon as you know him."

By an examination of early improvements in the City of Hartford, the reader can clearly see, as in a mirror facing the colonial period of its history, the ancient town with all its old customs, disorder, encroachments, muddy highways, wooden buildings and long-standing needs. What the newborn citizens did to improve Hartford was what they admitted had been very unsatisfactory. No party of citizens since, has surpassed them in wisdom, method or enthusiasm, at the task of building a city. The powers they had sought, and received in the city's charter, disclose the failures of their town government. The Court of Common Council, at its first meeting July 13th, appointed a committee to prepare city by-laws, and one after another, as they were reported, the freemen approved them. The better regulation of trade and commerce was one of their first concerns. Inspectors were

appointed for everything they exported. Goods were sent out, with the brand of Hartford upon them. Conferences were held with representatives of other Connecticut cities, to further their common interests. An act was passed relative to weights and measures, providing for sealing the same and punishing all fraud. Meanwhile, a committee of these new citizens had been observing the nuisances in their streets. Their first act reforming these was to restrain swine from going at large. In 1797, a similar ordinance was passed with reference to cattle, sheep and horses, and, a few years later, they suppressed the geese. On September 6th, this committee reported "that in each and all Streets and Highways in the City, Nuisances and Obstructions are so numerous, multiplied and varied into too many Shapes and Forms to admit of a particular Description or enumeration." They were then authorized "to run the lines of the several Streets within the City and to Ascertain and Mark out and fix the Limitts and Bounds of the same and sett up Monuments and Marks descriptive thereof." In their report on September 27th, they gave names to their main highways.[1] This report was accompanied with "a plan or map of the Bounds and Limits of the City, and also of the Highways and landing-places in the same, with their Bounds and lines, and of the encroachments made thereon." It was ordered on file, but has disappeared. Most likely it was a preliminary map, and was made by Solomon Porter, who afterwards carried his work to completion, in 1790. The records prove that his survey was exhibited at a City meeting, March 28, 1791. The Court of Common Council at a meeting March 31, 1792, having before it "Solomon Porter's Plan and Chart of the City, and Survey and Field Book," formally accepted and approved the same.[2] The establishment of the city's streets, after one hundred and fifty years of the town's careless administration, was one of their most difficult tasks in building the City of Hartford. Their

[1] "History of Hartford Streets" by Albert L. Washburn and Henry R. Buck in *Publications of the Municipal Art Society*, Bulletin No. 9., pp. 5–10.

[2] The original of this map is preserved among the collections of the Connecticut Historical Society, as also a copy. The Field Book is in the City Engineer's Department, where there is also a working copy of the map. Solomon Porter's survey has been proved in court as a legal authority by Mr. Albert L. Washburn.

ambitions were not satisfied with this. Throughout colonial times, the inhabitants had not demanded any radical alterations in their old roads. Workhouse Lane, from Trumbull to Ford streets, had been opened in 1725. Talcott Lane had been deeded to the town in 1761, by Samuel Talcott. Perhaps the inhabitants had begun to indicate, by the paths they made across lots, the location of other future highways. But, in 1788, several new streets were laid out. Colonel Wadsworth and others then deeded to the City land for Commerce Street. Morgan Street was laid out that year, from Main Street to the Connecticut River. In 1785, Captain Daniel Phelps conveyed to the City land for Theatre, now Temple Street, which was opened in 1788. About the same time, also, Prospect Street was laid out, and it soon became a fashionable location for residences. The inhabitants then began to take more particular notice of their buildings along these streets. An ordinance was passed in 1789, with reference to this matter, by which an undesirable nearness to the street could be prevented. The obstruction and misuse of sidewalks, which were then constructed by abutting owners, was forbidden in 1793. Public lamps were not provided by the City until 1821. Of course, there was then no public water supply, although "The Proprietors of the Hartford Aqueduct" conceived one in 1797, when they purchased Babcock's well, and they laid some wooden pipes.[1] A few householders probably had private drains. An amendment to the City's charter in 1843, empowered the Court of Common Council to construct sewers.[2] The preservation of the new city from fire was one of their earliest considerations. Apparently, a fire-engine was owned in Hartford in 1785, when Captain William Bull was appointed to have it repaired. Ladders and buckets had been the chief part of their fire apparatus in colonial times. The city was soon divided into fire wards. In 1789, they organized a fire department under an engineer.[3] The Court of Common Council also enacted some by-laws that reflect very

[1] *The Hartford Times*, Jan. 15 and Feb. 10, 1891.

[2] *The Hartford Courant*, Sept. 20, 1907.

[3] *The Hartford Times*, Nov. 16, 1907: *The Hartford Courant*, June 7, 1910. Sept. 25, and Dec. 28, 1913. See also Theodore Broome's *Record Book*, Ex-Chief Henry J. Eaton.

unpleasantly the sanitary conditions of the colonial town. Deeds have been found that prove the actual existence of hog-pens and barns along their streets. Factories for the manufacture of soap and tallow candles, tanneries and slaughter-houses, were not far away from some pretentious mansions. Within the town-plot there were ponds of water, more or less stagnant, and pools that served for drainage of their barns. An acquaintance with such conditions enables us to appreciate the wisdom and energy of the city fathers in dealing with them.

The progressive citizens, to whom Hartford owed its early incorporation, did not limit their efforts to these reforms and improvements. Their interest in commercial affairs became profitable in a way they did not at first anticipate. After the Revolutionary War, emigration up the Connecticut River became popular. Many who removed were from Connecticut. Then the era of up-river trade was inaugurated. Some of Hartford's leading merchants were engaged in it. "It is only six or seven years," says a writer in 1792, "since the first boat was built at Windsor, Vt. and business is now increased to hundreds of tons yearly." At that time sloops discharged their cargoes at Warehouse Point; but, after 1810, when the bridge was built, Hartford was the head of sloop navigation for eight years. In 1788, Colonel Wadsworth became interested in improving the river's channel. The sequel was the incorporation of John Caldwell, John Morgan and others in 1800 as the "Union Company," with the privilege of collecting tolls. A lottery was granted in 1789, for the purpose of erecting wharves at Hartford. In these and other commercial schemes, these same citizens were interested. The Hartford Bank was incorporated in 1792 "to facilitate commercial operations." Its officers and most of its directors were among the memorialists of 1784. Indeed, wherever one finds in the records, newspapers or manuscripts of those years, the details of any new enterprise, which it was thought would be for the up-building of the City of Hartford or the welfare of its inhabitants, there the names of these citizens testify to their devotion.

Thus it happened, in the year 1792, when the erection of

a State House was proposed, these were the men to claim it for Hartford's square. A proposition had been made that very year, by a writer in *The Connecticut Courant*, with much plausibility, to sell from that area two rows of store lots, to raise money to extend the public landings on the river. It was then described as "a valuable but now uſeleſs ſurplus . . . large, rough, muddy, deformed ſquare, commonly called State-Square, one fourth of the year almoſt impaſsable by man or beaſt; moſt of it of little uſe except as a lumberyard, and from the peculiar nature of the ſoil and the preſent ſtate of the town, there is little proſpect of its being improved by leveling, paving &c." [1] As early as April, however, "the Subscribers for a New Court-Houſe" had been requested to meet "at Mr. David Bull's Long Room" on "business of importance." [2] Their subscription paper is dated June 1st. The leading signers were: Jere Wadsworth, Thoˢ Seymour, George Wyllys, John Trumbull, John Caldwell, Jnº Morgan, Barˢ Deane, David Bull, Hudson & Goodwin, Wm, Jos. & R. Hart, Thoˢ Hopkins & Charles Hopkins, Wᵐ Moseley and Chauncey Goodrich, who subscribed sums from one hundred to five hundred dollars, and forty-five others, whose subscriptions were smaller. Most of those here named had been, or then were, members of the Court of Common Council. All of the subscribers were the City's friends — the representatives of the memorialists of 1784. So it has come to pass, by no purpose of theirs but the fortunes of time, that the historic edifice, which they and their associates did so much to erect, survives as a memorial of the early struggles of the City of Hartford.

"Post Nubila Phoebus."

[1] *The Connecticut Courant*, Feb. 27, 1792.
[2] *Ibid.*, April 23, 1792.

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